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May 4. Edward Grieg.	Sept. 14. Madame Patey.
May 11. Carl Rosa.	Sept. 21. Mr. Arthur Oswald.
May 18. F. H. Cowen.	Sept. 28. The Bayreuth Conductors.
May 25. Senor Sarasate.	Oct. 5. Miss Rosalind F. Ellicott.
June 1. Frederic Cliffe.	Oct. 12. Dr. A. C. Mackenzie.
June 8. An Idyl.	Oct. 19. Dr. Bernhard Scholz.
June 15. Fraulein Hermine Spies.	Oct. 26. Madame Patti-Nicolini.
June 22. Signorina Teresina Tua.	Nov. 2. Johannes Brahms.
June 29. Madame Marcella Sembrich.	Nov. 9. Professor Villiers Stanford.
July 6. Madame Becker Gröndhal.	Nov. 16. Arrigo Boito.
July 13. Sir John Stainer.	Nov. 23. Mr. and Mrs. Henschel.
July 20. Madame Lillian Nordica.	Nov. 30. Miss Marianne Eissler.
July 27. M. Jean de Reszke.	Dec. 7. Madame Trebelli.
Aug. 3. Charles Dibdin.	Dec. 14. Mr. J. H. Bonawitz.
Aug. 10. Joseph Hollman.	Dec. 21. Robert Browning.
Aug. 17. Madame Sarah Bernhardt.	Dec. 28. Miss Grace Damian.
Aug. 24. Frau Amalie Materna.	Jan. 4. Mr. Plunket Greene.
Aug. 31. Herr Van Dyck.	Jan. 11. Mr. Frederick Corder.
Sept. 7. M. Johannes Wolff.	

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SPECIAL NOTICES.

- * * The Business Departments of the MUSICAL WORLD are now under the management of Mr. L. V. Lewis, the Manager of "The Observer," 396, Strand, to whom all communications must be addressed. Remittances should be made payable to the Proprietors.
- * * All advertisements for the current week's issue should be lodged with the Printer not later than noon Thursday.
- * * MSS. and Letters intended for publication must be addressed to THE EDITOR. Rejected MSS. cannot be returned unless accompanied by stamped directed envelope.

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The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1890.

FACTS AND COMMENTS.

An ecclesiastic of the Roman Church, Giuseppe Chini, who is also an individual of some musical capacity (or, perhaps, we should say ambition), has just proved that the old connection between divinity and diplomacy still exists in undiminished vigour. He had engaged an imposing body of instrumental and choral executants with a view to the performance of a musical setting of Carducci's Ode in honour of the Queen of Italy. But scarcely had the rehearsals of his work begun when he received a hint through

the Cardinal Vicar that the performance of a piece on such a subject in Rome, and composed too by a priest, would be regarded by His Holiness with great disfavour. The wily composer therefore at once proceeded to adapt to his music the words of an Ode to the Virgin, written by Tommaseo, and in this form it was executed with full episcopal sanction. The result is said to have been far from satisfactory, but no doubt means were found to prevent the inconsistency between the words and the music from being attributed to the composer.

* *

The body of the late Senor Gayarré has been embalmed, and, draped in black, has lain in state for some days in a chamber adjoining the room in which he died. In Madrid, whose people are still mourning the death of their favourite tenor, it is asserted that the cold which sowed the germs of the ultimately fatal disease was contracted five or six years ago. It was at first so slight that Gayarré took no notice of it, and so slow was its progress that its serious effects were quite unsuspected. An examination of the larynx made since his death has revealed the secret. A story of the kind usually current at the death of a great artist is being told also, and, whether true or not, is at least pathetic. Three weeks before the end Gayarré was singing at the Madrid Opera in Bizet's "I Pescatori di Perle." He reached the beautiful romance in the first act, and sang the first phrases with his wonted power, but just as he should have attacked the highest notes of the succeeding passage he was seen to stop, press his hand to his throat, and lean back against a piece of scenery, while he cried twice despairingly, "I cannot do it!" The audience, nevertheless, gave him round upon round of applause; but Gayarré left the stage, and was never heard again.

* *

A correspondent who, presumably, was an admirer of the late singer sends us the following effusion. Poor Gayarré certainly had his faults—but did he deserve this?—

GIULIANO GAYARRE.

The glorious voice is hushed and still,
For Vasco's journey's done;
In Heaven he shall be heard again,
But on earth his course is run.

The "Favorita" mourns her dead,
Lucrèce her kith and kin;
While luckless Elsa's bathed in tears
For the loss of Lohengrin.

Poor Valentina, too, has lost
Raoul for evermore,
And Marguerite in sorrow grieves
As she never grieved before.

And the world of music bows her head,
Bent with the deepest woe;
For his like can never be found again
In this vale of tears below.

E. D. P.

* *

We understand that arrangements are being made for the holding of an exhibition in London one section of which shall illustrate the history and development of military music. The idea is commendable, for this department of the art has been so powerful a factor in our national life that its neglect by students is quite inexcusable. We have before expressed our belief that contemporary composers would confer a lasting benefit if they would occasionally write good music for performance by military bands. It would in any

case be an honourable thing to a musician that his work should be played on the occasions which offer to the great mass of the working classes their only opportunity of hearing music of greater value than the rubbish which is at present the staple element in military programmes; and it would be surely a higher thing, and by no means unattainable, that even on the battle-field our soldiers should march to victory inspired by the strains of the writers of to-day, whose names would thus be linked immortally with noble achievements. This apart, however, the importance and interest of the proposed exhibition, of which further details will shortly be available, are so great that we trust it will be supported cordially by all.

* * *

Dr. E. H. Turpin is an admirable musician, and none can rejoice more sincerely than ourselves at the deserved honour which has recently been bestowed on him. It is, however, at the hour of a man's triumph that the jealous fates often step in to abase his pride, and those who believe in "special providences" may perhaps discover something of the kind in the curious error perpetrated by a writer in the "Musical Standard," a journal with which Dr. Turpin is understood to be connected. A song by Mr. Hamish McCunn, to a lyric by Mr. Joseph Bennett, recently appeared in the "English Illustrated Magazine." By an unfortunate accident the pages were wrongly numbered, so that, in "making up," the middle and final sections of the song were transposed. Hereupon our contemporary, ever anxious to recognise new developments of the art, delivered itself as follows:—"But perhaps the most peculiar feature of this song is its strange and original conclusion. So vague and unfinished does this sound—the final chord is, G, G, B flat and E flat, with the key signature of B flat, and no double bar is marked—that the music would seem to be a portion of some incomplete work, a sort of fragment of some precious Sybilline leaves the remainder of which are withheld or unfortunately destroyed. Students of our art and collectors of musical singularities will find this song a remarkable example of mysticism and fresh thought. From the pen of so gifted and eminent a writer the piece might indeed have no little influence on the future of independent English music. The device in question, bold as it is, is not, however, a new invention. One of the choruses in Handel's 'Samson' has an instance not dissimilar, inasmuch as the voices terminate with harmony not tonic in its bearing. The song now referred to, however, pushes the idea 'further afield.'" Mr. McCunn, no doubt, regrets that he cannot claim the credit, which belongs solely to the printer, of having invented, or even developed, this striking idea. And, as has been suggested, something eminently dramatic may be discerned in the circumstance, which will by some be regarded as a thorn in the side sent at this particular juncture lest the new Doctor should become too much puffed up; but there will be ample excuse for him if he should fail to appreciate the dramatic fitness of his colleague's critical disaster.

* * *

In one point at least of artistic taste they are certainly ahead of us in St. Petersburg, where the "recall" and *encore* nuisance has reached such proportions that the audiences of the Alexandra Theatre have been formally requested by the management not to insist upon recalling any artist during the progress of an act, and are even asked to express their satisfaction with any performance in a more restrained manner than is at present customary. This is a step in the right direction, for it is obviously useless to expect that an artist, who, after all, is "only a man," can resist the

demand for repetition of a song when made by an over-enthusiastic audience. If English opera-goers would recognise this fact, and decently refrain from interrupting a performance by applause which would be quite as grateful if bestowed at the fall of the curtain, we should be in a fair way towards a higher plane of musical taste.

* * *

Messrs. Breitkopf and Härtel, the great Leipzig publishers, have in the press a beautiful new edition of the vocal score of "Lohengrin." It is in large octavo size, with English text *above* the German, showing that it is principally intended for sale in this country. The English translation is a new one, from the pen of Mr. F. Corder, and the engraving is executed with unusual care, the proofs having been in hand for nearly two years. If any exception may be taken it would be to the printing of all the numerous marks of expression, indications of instrumentation, &c., in both German and English, with the result of crowding up the pages unnecessarily. Why this objection of Germans to the use of the Italian language as an international medium for these matters?

* * *

For the benefit of such of our readers as are interested in "Scientific, Physical, and Vocal Culture" we transcribe the following advertisement from an American contemporary. We do not wish to be ungallant, but we must confess a hope that some of our artists—we beg pardon—*artistes*, may be induced to acquire the means of making their cheeks and necks plump and rosy—fully illustrated:—

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* * *

The "New York Evening Post," quoting some remarks from our own columns upon a foolish article in the "American Musician," says:—"The Musical World" appears to labour under a delusion. In New York the 'Musician' is not looked upon as a musical but as a comic paper. It is edited by a few journalistic tramps, whose opinion in musical matters is as valuable to artists as a certificate of good moral character from the 'Town Topics' would be to a theological student. Indeed, a 'musical critic' of the 'Musician' is a member of that paper's editorial staff. Humbug easily flourishes in musical journalism as in music teaching, but its course is usually short-lived." How these critics love one another!

* * *

Mr. P. T. Barnum has kindly promised to give a short sketch of his life, with many hitherto unpublished incidents and stories, in the Indian Music Room of Lady Aberdeen's house, 27, Grosvenor-square, on Jan. 30, at 3:0. The proceeds will be devoted to the Irish Home Industries, and, as Mr. Barnum is a most amusing *raconteur*, there should be no difficulty in raising a substantial sum for so deserving a fund. Tickets, at 10s. 6d. and 5s., may be had of Mr. J. S. Wood, 2, Princes Mansions, S.W.

* * *

The first of three lectures on the Musical Renaissance was given by Mr. Morton Latham, M.A., Mus.B., at Trinity College, London, on Tuesday afternoon, before the Warden and a large audience of professors and students.

The People's Concert Society, whose judiciously-planned and well-timed efforts to bring good music within reach of the "masses," are, happily, well known, gave their five hundred and fifth concert on Saturday last at the Town Hall, Poplar. The programme contained, *inter alia*, Schumann's D minor Trio for piano, violin, and 'cello, Beethoven's variations on "Ich bin der Schneider Kakadu" for the same combination of instruments, Gluck's "Che farò," and songs by Gounod and Rubinstein. Miss Clara Robson and Mr. F. Connery were responsible for the vocal, MM. Arthur Bent, Clement Hann, and Algernon Ashton for the instrumental items, and Mr. Charles Imhof accompanied.

* *

Whatever of good or evil the recent discussion on the morals of the music-hall stage has accomplished it is entitled to credit for the experiment which was tried at the Empire Theatre on Monday, when Miss Amy Roselle recited Tennyson's "Rizpah" with full scenic accessories. The poem chosen seemed hardly likely to appeal with much directness to an audience accustomed to the bewildering convolutions of boneless gentlemen and the misty humours of the "serio," and the success achieved under apparently unfavourable circumstances may therefore serve as an answer to those myopic persons who have lately contended that disaster must ensue from the introduction of the dramatic element into the music hall. A poem of simple human interest, intelligently recited, can scarcely fail to touch some hearers to finer issues, and if the "legitimate drama" has anything to fear from such a quarter it must make way for a form of theatrical amusement which, if less legitimate, will also be less fragile.

* *

Those of our compatriots who reside in Paris, or who may have chanced to see the last issue of our Parisian contemporary, "Le Ménestrel," will probably have been thrown into grievous tribulation by the announcement therein contained that Mr. W. S. Gilbert, the popular Savoy librettist, is dead. To such our message is that of the poet of "Lycidas" — "Weep no more, gentle shepherds, weep no more!" — for W. S. Gilbert, your sorrow, is not dead. Our contemporary, with the inaccuracy by no means peculiar to French journals, has mistaken the regretted death of this gentleman's father for that of the author of "Brantingham Hall" and other plays unbeloved — as he asserts — of the critics. According to latest reports W. S. himself is still with us.

* *

The majority of our readers will doubtless have read with sympathetic interest the letter which appeared in our last issue upon the subject of street music, and also the correspondence upon the same subject in recent numbers of the "Times." The abuse has reached such proportions that there is imperative need for more stringent legislation, for it is intolerable that anyone should be at the mercy of every organ-grinder or cornet-player. Insentient or unmusical people may scoff; but to the brain-worker, the artist, and, worst of all, to the invalid, the street musician comes as the inflietor of a very real torture. He may be driven a few doors away, but there is nothing to prevent his frequent return to shatter the nerves and interrupt work with his dreadful engine. A writer in our contemporary acutely asks why, if silent begging be a punishable crime, the same trade may be carried on with impunity if aggravated with noises, vocal or instrumental, more or less hideous? We wish our correspondent complete success in the crusade he has inaugurated.

We are asked to state that, owing to the severe indisposition of Miss Marguerite Hall, the vocal recital which was announced by herself and Mr. William Nicholl for Tuesday next is postponed. The dates now arranged are Feb. 18 (3:0 p.m.), April 15 (8:30 p.m.), and May 13 (8:30 p.m.).

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS.

BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

(Continued from page 27.)

Last week we gave by telegram the result of the discussion on counterpoint which took place on Thursday morning. Now we will say something about the discussion itself. Mr. E. Prout proposed "That it is desirable that a due proportion of questions in strict counterpoint be added to the present Examination Book of the society." Mr. Prout wished the society to be as wide as possible in its scope, so that it might include within its ranks the most rigid musical conservative and the most advanced musical radical, and hence desired to see strict counterpoint on at least an equal footing with free. The resolution was seconded by Dr. Vincent, who stated that to his knowledge many members of the musical profession considered that the society was not merely indifferent, but antagonistic to counterpoint, and consequently refused to join it. Mr. A. Page (Nottingham) considered Mr. Prout's motion unnecessary. He suggested, however, that on every syllabus there should be a notification that candidates might use strict or free counterpoint. Miss Oliveria Prescott thought that composers could not do better than study strict counterpoint, which was a splendid exercise in composition, and an aid to the invention of melodies. Mr. H. F. Frost contended that if musical diplomas were granted to candidates who had not been examined in strict counterpoint, then the society had better be called not National, but Radical. Dr. Hiles considered that the passing of the resolution would be a retrograde course, and declared that they did not want to turn their faces, like Lot's wife, but to go forward. Mr. W. H. Cummings at last proposed an addition to Mr. Prout's resolution. The questions set in strict counterpoint were to be included "for optional adoption." To this Mr. Prout agreed: he wanted a distinct recognition by their society of strict counterpoint as an important part of the education of a musical student. The resolution thus amended was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

In the afternoon the members of the society visited the Cathedral and Redcliff Church.

In the evening the members were invited to a concert given by the Orpheus Glee Society at the Victoria Rooms. Space will not allow us to give the full programme, but we may mention that it included Dr. Wesley's fine five-part glee, "I wish to tune;" S. Webbe's "Discord, dire sister;" "The Nightingale," by Weelkes; and Stevens's "The cloud-capp'd towers." Also "Hushed in Death," by Dr. Hiles; and "Oh, the Summer Night," by Mr. W. H. Cummings, both of which were enthusiastically applauded, and the latter conducted by the composer. Before the last piece in the programme was given, Mr. E. Chadfield rose and proposed a vote of thanks to the members of the Orpheus Glee Society. He reminded the audience that the beautiful part-singing to which they had just been listening was of a different character from that of the previous evening, so that, fortunately, comparison was not possible. Even as regarded the singing itself, it would have been difficult to assert that the one was more enjoyable than the other. There were loud calls for Mr. Riseley, the conductor, to whose able efforts so much of the success was due. That gentleman spoke a few words, and expressed a hope that at its next visit to Bristol the society would hear some instrumental music.

Dr. Hiles personally thanked the choir for the manner in which they had given his glee, and expressed an opinion that it would be impossible to hear finer part-singing in the world than theirs.

On Friday morning Dr. E. J. Hopkins presided at a meeting, and read a paper on "Some old organs and organ-builders." He had much to say about Master Thomas Dallam, who constructed an elaborately designed mechanical organ, a gift from Queen Elizabeth to the Sultan of Turkey. Dallam went himself to Constantinople with the instrument, and the lecturer read many quaint and amusing extracts from Dallam's diary preserved in the British Museum. The latter part of the paper consisted of curious extracts from old parish registers, which created much merriment. A vote of thanks to Dr. Hopkins for his amusing and instructive paper was

proposed by Dr. Longhurst, seconded by Dr. Bunnnett, and carried by acclamation.

Mr. W. H. Cummings followed with a paper on "Fingering, past, present, and future." He seemed to think that after the lively paper just read his would appear dry. But in this he was mistaken: it was most interesting, and, moreover, eminently practical. He wished to secure uniformity in the fingering of music for the pianoforte or organ. Every musician knows that at present there are two systems in vogue: in one the fingering is marked, \times 1, 2, 3, 4, in the other 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. The former is known as the "English," and that fact alone would account for its prevalence in this country. The other, however, is the more convenient, and English compositions would stand a better chance of being played on the Continent if fingered in the manner usual there. Mr. Cummings, feeling sure that there was but little opposition to the so-called "foreign" fingering *per se*, and that the other was adhered to mostly through sentiment, set to work to show, and this he did most conclusively, not only that the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 was used in England up to a comparatively recent period, but that the other method, the one known as English, was first employed on the Continent. In support of his argument he referred to various old works of the 16th and 17th centuries.

After a few remarks from one or two speakers, and a short reply by Mr. Cummings, the sitting terminated in the usual manner.

There was another meeting in the afternoon, over which Mr. Cummings presided. Mr. Chadfield, delegate to the Music Teachers' Association of America, read his report. This society, founded in 1876 at Delaware, Ohio, can already boast of more than 1,600 members. It has done much for the cause of music in America, and the standard of teaching and the status of teachers have been materially improved thereby. Mr. Chadfield met with a most cordial reception. The place of meeting of the Conference of 1891 was discussed. London, Bradford, and Liverpool were proposed, but on a division the last-named city was selected.

In the evening a banquet was held at the Royal Hotel, over which the Mayor presided. In proposing the toast, "The continued prosperity of the society," he spoke of the good, social and artistic, which it was bringing about. Speeches were made by Mr. Chadfield, Dr. Hiles, Mr. G. Riseley, and others. A word may be added with regard to Mr. G. Riseley, the well-known Cathedral organist. He is not satisfied with the great name which Bristol has acquired for vocal music, but he is anxious for the cultivation of orchestral music, and is at this moment training a large amateur band, which in no distant time will be able to give a good account of itself. This banquet brought the proceedings of the week to an eminently sociable and satisfactory ending.

THE ARTISTIC TEMPERAMENT.

BY L. G. M. BLYTH.

(Continued from page 28.)

Of the advantages accruing to the possession of the artistic temperament I must not speak at any length. As far as my present observation has gone, I consider them to be chiefly these. In the first place, every sense being keener than in other temperaments, the enjoyment of all that is good and beautiful is rendered two-fold more strong in the case of such as these, than in that of ordinary mortals. Their quicker perception enables them to spring at once to the root of a matter, to gather up the disconnected threads in a discourse, while their sense of the beautiful places them at once in perfect harmony with nature, so that the majesty of the mountain, the gloom of the pine forest, the glories of the sunset, are to them as very foretastes of Heaven. To them the mountain contains subterranean halls peopled with gnomes who are ever busy with the fates and fortunes of men; the forest is the abode of the Erl-König, who rides on the gale that rocks the giant pines, his long white hair and ice-fringed robe streaming behind him, and the sunset is a vision, an entrancing vision of that mysterious land "which is very far off," a country in which, could they but reach it, they might meet Galahad, the "Lily Maid of Astolat," Parsifal the holy Knight of the Graal, and all that host of purified spirits who have gone before them to realise in the "spiritual city"—

"All her spires and gateways like one pearl"—

that perfection of which they could but dream in this prosaic world, to

live for ever in the full flood of the pure white light which was their guide on earth to the one true art.

And if the artistic temperament can, for its possessor, somewhat ameliorate the hardships of life by clothing their rugged bareness in a rosy light, even if such light exist after all only in the artist's deluded brain, is it not a blessing to be grateful for?

Yet another advantage springing from this disposition is a certain delicacy of manner and refinement of feeling which render the artist an agreeable member of society, a pleasant companion; and withal a lightness of heart, an optimistic way of looking at things which draws men towards him by an irresistible attraction.

Amongst the disadvantages is that uncomfortably high-strung condition of the nerves known as "sensitiveness." The life of many an artist is embittered by an overweening sensitiveness. This affliction—for I can call it nothing else—takes all manner of forms, and in each and every form attacks its unfortunate victim without mercy. Sometimes it is shyness, which makes its unhappy owner hang back just at the moment when to have come to the fore would have made his future; at others it is depreciation of self which takes away all that confidence which is so necessary in order to convince an ignorant world of the truth; or again, it is a tender-heartedness which sinks crushed beneath the sneers of men, or an ill-regulated generosity which ruins itself sooner than see others suffer; and in some cases it amounts to nothing short of madness, which renders its victim a burden to himself and to all with whom he comes in contact. This sensitiveness, which is part and parcel of the artistic nature, may be the means of raising it far above the level of ordinary humanity into the realms of the ethereal and divine; or it may, on the other hand, be merely the means of degrading it into a mass of selfishness and indulgent luxury more revolting by far than the grosser debauchery of a lower nature which knows no better. After all, like all other gifts of the All-Father, it may be used equally for good and for bad. Another characteristic which almost invariably appertains to the artistic temperament, and is a distinct disadvantage, is a certain delicacy of constitution. Prosaic mortals in the enjoyment of robust health may sneer at this statement, but it is a fact, nevertheless. And it is easily accounted for. First, the mind of the artist is only too frequently cultivated at the expense of the body. Long hours of study, to the exclusion of bodily exercise, midnight work, and consequent loss of sleep and appetite, must tell more or less on a naturally sensitive subject. Then again, this peculiar disposition is the one of all others most calculated to magnify trifles, to worry desperately over that which would make not even a passing impression on an ordinary mortal. In short the artist, by reason of his very nature, exists at all times in an atmosphere of mental excitement and spiritual exaltation which is, to say the least, detrimental to robust bodily health. That this may be in some degree mitigated I am well aware, and certainly the most sensible artists are those who endeavour to associate in their persons the enlightened art-culture of the ancient Greek with some of his wise attention to manly sports and exercises. Why is it that modern sculpture can never come near that of classic Greece? Simply because there are no such models forthcoming. Let artists then look a little more closely to the care of their bodies. This may be rank heresy from the Bedford Park point of view, but no artist need fear to lose his inspiration by providing a strong body for his big soul. We now come to consider how the artistic temperament is regarded, first by the artists themselves, then by the world at large. The genuine artist looks upon it as one of the most valuable weapons which a wise Creator has placed in his hand, and as a weapon he will use it in the service of all that is great, noble, and enlightened. With it he will mercilessly attack all that is false in art; with it he will shield himself from the attacks of his enemies; with it he will make his way over rough and thorny passes to Monsalvat, the home of purest art. The recognition of it in others will impel him to "gladly unite" with them "to fight with holy courage" for the cause which they have at heart. And, alas! we cannot but confess that there are amongst those who ought to be artists some who, in their boundless conceit, look upon the possession of an artistic nature, for which they are in no way responsible, as a badge of superiority, which at once makes them as gods among their fellow-men, and atones for every shortcoming on the plea that they "are not as other men are," and can therefore not be judged as other men. Deluded mortals! know ye not that since your nature is a higher nature ye shall be judged by a higher standard than your fellows? It is the terrible prevalence of this self-righteous-

ness amongst should-be artists which has brought the world to look upon all who follow art, with very few exceptions, as weak deluded creatures, who "follow art" because they can find nothing better to do. They are too effeminate to be soldiers or sailors, have not sufficient wit and worldly wisdom for the Church, neither have they brains for the law. What, then, are they to do, poor things? Why, turn to art as a last resource, to be sure! There they will at least be able to contemplate themselves in peace without doing any particular harm to their fellow-creatures. In fact, it is to be feared that at the present time art is to the world but another name for *dilettantism*; and if such is the case it is largely the fault of artists themselves, who, through lack of earnestness and sincerity of purpose, have failed, miserably failed, to convince the world of truth. Much more I could say on this point, but space and time alike forbid. It remains therefore to consider in conclusion what should be the final aim and object in the life of the true artist. In the first place, this must be to form a high ideal of what art really is—what art *should* be; secondly, to overthrow and stamp out all that is false, all that is impure, and to raise in place thereof all that is noble, all that is truly great. And in order to do this artists must seek after union—not necessarily union of opinion, but union of aspiration, union of purpose, renunciation of self in the elevation of art. Let every artist seek after individual perfection, let the critic look to it that he is fit for his post, and have the moral courage to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and the whole tone of the art-world will be raised considerably higher than it now is. The aim, the object of every true artist must be truth, whether in music, in painting, in poetry, in sculpture, or in architecture, and above and beyond all this, in man. He alone is a true artist who is a true man. Therefore let me appeal to you once more, my brother artists, to "gladly unite, to fight with holy courage in the cause of truth, *aut vincere aut mori*."

THE FRENCH OPERA QUESTION.

TRANSLATED FROM "LE MÉNÉSTREL."

This week there has been a good deal of excitement over this famous "question," which is beginning to rouse all Paris to anger; and for the nonce we need merely repeat the remarks of our contemporaries. This course will be doubly advantageous; in the first place it will protect us against the ire of MM. Ritt and Gailhard, who will have their hands fully occupied if they mean to prosecute all the journals who are dissatisfied with their management; and, secondly, we shall prove to our readers by the quotations we shall make that the attack we have so long been waging against the ill-starred proceedings of these gentlemen is dictated by no personal spite, but that all free and independent minds are in agreement with us on the question. The accusations made by the "Figaro" naturally appear to have wounded the eminent directors the most keenly, for they will be the most widely echoed. To the precise declarations of M. Albert Delpit, on the subject of "the Vêronge de la Nux incident," they reply by an array of dates in which they hope to find their justification. The passage is too long for us to reproduce in its entirety, but "Gil Blas" gives the following impartial summary of it:—

MM. Ritt and Gailhard declare that they received the two-act opera "Zaire" on Sept. 14th, 1886 (Emile Pessard's opera "Tabarin" having been performed Jan. 12th, 1885, that of M. Vêronge de la Nux ought, in accordance with the conditions agreed upon, to have been played in 1887.) On the 4th of June, 1887, a complaint was lodged with the Minister. No news was received from M. Vêronge de la Nux. On the 9th of February, 1888, a fresh complaint was made to the Minister, the composer having sent nothing but the first act of his work. At last, on Nov. 27th, 1889, the author handed over the piano and vocal parts, and on Dec. 21st, after an order of the court had been served upon him, he produced the orchestral score, "that is to say, two years after the delivery ought to have been made."

Here, on the other side, is the *résumé* of M. Vêronge de la Nux's very straightforward and courageous statement, as given by the same journal:—

"On June 28, 1887, the libretto of "Zaire" was accepted by the Opera, and in the first week of July, 1887, it was handed over to the composer. In February, 1888, at the request of MM. Ritt and Gailhard, he played the first act and the first three scenes of the second. More than a year ago word was sent to MM. Ritt and Gailhard that the work was quite

ready, to which they replied, "Wait for your turn." At last, on December 21, the entire orchestral score was sent to the Opera House three hours before the receipt of the writ."

After having reproduced these two statements in *extenso*, M. Delpit thus sums up in the "Figaro":—

"The letter of MM. Ritt and Gailhard has just been read, and I leave our readers to form their own opinion after having perused M. Vêronge de la Nux's statement. I will only add one word myself. M. V. de la Nux told us at the sitting of the commission of dramatic authors and composers that M. Ritt had drawn up for him a rough draft of a letter in which he (M. de la Nux) admitted that he was guilty of delay. The president, M. Sardou, asked the composer—

"Then, did M. Ritt demand a false statement from you?"

"Yes, a false statement," replied M. de la Nux.

Let us ask with the public, "Who is wrong and who is right?"

Here again is a rather curious "interview" which we find in "L'Estafette":

"What do you think of the opera question?" we asked yesterday of a gentleman whose official position compels us to withhold his name, but who, by virtue of that position, is better able than anyone else to know of and to form a decision on the closing incidents. 'The opera question,' replied our informant, 'is not merely one of to-day. In political and journalistic circles a general outcry has lately been raised against the managers, but the charges brought against them might with equal justice have been made a year or two ago, for they did not then, any more than they do now, fulfil their engagements according to the agreed conditions. With respect to the works to be performed every year—for example, MM. Ritt and Gailhard are at this moment behindhand with one important and two minor operas—the Society of Composers considers M. Ambroise Thomas's 'Tempest' a great work. That is not my opinion, nor, I think, is it that of the management. As to MM. Ritt and Gailhard's pretence to reckon 'Romeo and Juliet' as a new work, it isn't even worth discussing. Those gentlemen are, therefore, a long way behind the six acts which, according to the conditions, they are bound to mount every year.' 'What complaints are urged against the management with respect to the fittings?' 'On this point MM. Ritt and Gailhard put forward a very strange theory; they pretend that, as the fittings belong to the State, they are not bound to renew them. This supposition is obviously inadmissible, for they have full use of these fittings, and they employ them for the purpose of making a profit; it is a natural conclusion, therefore, not only that they should keep them in repair, but that they should renew those portions which are worn out. It seems that in the mere matter of repairs there is a good deal to be desired, and yet, after a season as busy as that of the Exhibition, when daily performances have been given at the opera for six months in succession, there must be a good deal to repair, and not a little besides to be replaced. During these six months the managers have netted enormous sums, yet this does not prevent them from leaving certain decorations in a lamentable state, and from using hangings whose colour is almost entirely gone."

"What do you think of the charges brought against the managers with respect to the staff?"

"On this point opinions are divided; some suppose that we are level with, and that we even excel the other great European theatres, whilst others think that we are very much below them. That is a matter of opinion on which it is difficult to decide. One thing is certain though; that is, that since Mlle. Renée Richard left our first lyric stage has been without a contralto, and that this has made it impossible to perform 'Le Prophète,' 'Hamlet,' 'La Favorite,' and 'Henry VIII.' It is a shame that, with the subsidy granted by the State, a gap of this important nature should be allowed to remain unstopped in our National Academy for months at a time. MM. Ritt and Gailhard are, moreover, blamed, not without reason, for allowing young people on leaving the Conservatoire to make their *début* in important rôles which are too much for them."

"In short," said our informant, "I cannot explain why such a furious onslaught is being made just now on MM. Ritt and Gailhard when there was such good reason for making it a long while ago. A solution of the difficulty cannot be found until M. Fallière returns from Nérac. But for my part I should not be sorry if these gentlemen were allowed to go on in the same way to the end. They still have two years to run; let them run them; perhaps they will eat up a little of the money they have gained so easily during the Exhibition. There wouldn't be any harm in that."

"Yes, but the public will be the losers by it."

"Not at all. The conditions are laid down; all we have to do is to try but to try vigorously, to make their clauses respected."

MADAME GEORGINA BURNS.

Madame Georgina Burns, whose portrait we present to our readers this week, is certainly to be counted amongst the most gifted artists of native birth. Ten years ago she was taken to the late Carl Rosa, who, having heard her sing but one air—"Home, sweet Home"—at once discerned with his usual penetrative judgment with what capabilities the young artist was endowed. He engaged her as a member of his opera company, of which she has since remained one of the chief attractions. Her *répertoire* now embraces more than fifty operas, of which her favourite and most successful rôles are Marguerite ("Faust"), Cherubino in "Figaro," "Carmen," and Filina ("Mignon"). To Madame Burns belongs the credit of having created the chief parts in "Esmeralda" and "Nadeshda" (Goring Thomas) and "Colomba" (Mackenzie)—each of these having been written for her by their distinguished composers. The largeness of her *répertoire* is sufficient indication of the flexibility and range of her style. Madame Burns will be seen in all her most popular impersonations during the season of grand opera to be given by the Carl Rosa Company at Drury Lane in April, including Catherine in Meyerbeer's "Star of the North," in Halevy's "La Juive," and in the leading rôle of Mr. Cowen's new Scandinavian opera. Two items of personal interest may be added—that Madame Burns prosecuted her musical studies solely under Mr. Randegger, and—this being already well known—that she is married to Mr. Leslie Crotty, the well-known baritone of the Carl Rosa Opera Company. As an example of her popularity in the provinces we may append the following extract from a Liverpool journal, giving an account of a recent performance by Madame Burns of "The Star of the North":—

"Madame Georgina Burns again made a wonderful impression in the exigent part of Catherine, which no soprano of our day has been able to present excepting Patti. The marvellous and florid music of this part is unattainable except by an exceptional voice, and the *bravura* and embellishments of the music are of such a character that only the absolute mastery of Madame Burns' method could achieve the intentions of the score. It is needless to say that in the executive facility these difficulties were easily overcome, and that the part of Catherine in the hands of Madame Burns has become one of the classics of the lyric drama of our day. The opera was altogether so finely presented as to delight the old connoisseurs as well as the younger critics, and its repetition during the season is sure to be anticipated with great favour."

SIGNOR RONCONI.

By a strange coincidence two famous artists have died within a few days of each other in Madrid; for the grave had not yet closed over Gayarré when, within the same city walls, Giorgio Ronconi, the once famous baritone, died also. It will be of interest to reproduce here, in place of the usual barren historical details, a few passages from the "Reminiscences" of the late Henry Chorley; simply premising that the deceased artist is said to have been born at Milan in 1810, and made his *début* at Pavia in 1831.

"I have now to speak of a great artist, in every respect the reverse of the delicious singer just parted with.—Greater could not be the contrast in every attribute and qualification, than between the excellent *contralto*, with her incomparable voice, her undramatic style, her brilliant execution, and her grand Coreggio face—and the baritone, with his wondrously limited means so shaped and turned to account by Genius, as to make every limit, every defect, forgotten and forgiven.—It was not till the Royal Italian Opera House was opened that the English had the remotest idea of the wonderful endowments of Signor Ronconi as an actor, and their power to make forgotten vocal defects which, with any one else, must have been fatal and decisive. There are few instances of a voice so limited in compass (hardly exceeding an octave), so inferior in quality, so weak, so habitually out of tune as his.—Nor has its owner ever displayed any compensating executive power. Volubility there has been none, nor variety in ornament—one close, of the simplest possible form, doing duty perpetually,—in this, marking the entire contrast between him and his predecessor, Signor Tamburini!—Skill of phrasing there has been; especially in the languid slow movements affected to satiety by Bellini and Donizetti. I dwell on these facts all the more emphatically, because it will be next to impossible for persons of the next generation to conceive the slender

physical means on which his popularity has been built; and (what makes the wonder more strange), in many of the characters which that magnificently-gifted artist and singer, Lablache, had delighted to present.—And more, there has not been anything like personal beauty, or presence, to make amends for deficiencies of tone. The low stature—the features, unmarked and commonplace when silent,—promising nothing to an audience—yet which could express a dignity of bearing, a tragic passion which cannot be exceeded, or an exuberance of the wildest, quaintest, most whimsical, most spontaneous comedy, flung out by animal spirits in Mirth's most tameless humour,—these things we have seen, and have forgotten personal insignificance, vocal power below mediocrity; every falling-short, every disqualification, in the spell of strong, real, sensibility. I owe some of my best opera evenings to Signor Ronconi; and, looking back, cannot resist trying to specify a few,—difficult though the task be, of putting on record effects so sudden, so transient, and, in his case, I fancy, so little studied beforehand.

There have been few such examples of terrible courtly tragedy in Italian Opera as Signor Ronconi's *Cheeruse*:—the polished demeanour of his earlier scenes giving a fearful force of contrast to the latter ones when the torrent of pent-up passion nears the precipice. In spite of the discrepancy between all our ideas of serious and sentimental music, and the old French dresses which we are accustomed to associate with the Dorantes and Alcestes of Molière's dramas, the terror of the last scene, when (betwixt his teeth almost), the great artist uttered the line,

"Sull'uscio tremendo lo sguardo fuggiamo,"

clutching, the while, the weak and guilty woman by her wrist, as he dragged her to the door behind which her falsity was screened, was something fearful—a sound to chill the blood—a sight to stop the breath.

Then, again, it was Signor Ronconi's dignity and force, as the Doge, which saved "I due Foscari" from utter condemnation at the new theatre:—a feat all the more remarkable from his being grouped in that opera with Madame Grisi and Signor Mario; neither of whom found power in it to move the audience. The subtlety of his by-play in the last act was rare, original, and real.

In this last act, of "I due Foscari," the old, iron, noble Doge, tortured betwixt the heart of a father and the duties of a Monarch (half a slave to the jealous and corrupt and haughty folk who had invested him with supremacy), has to sit mute, while the lady, distracted at the impending death of her lover (his son, doomed by the Doge), vents prayers, tears, and, these last being fruitless, maledictions, against the Sovereign who will not pardon—against the father, who is as deaf to the voice of Nature as the "nether millstone;"—and the Doge is old, with a foretaste in him of death, bred of the resolution which has decreed his son's death, in obedience to his inexorable duty to Venice. How the Doge of whom I am speaking sate in his chair of state, with a hand on each elbow of it as moveless and impassive as the thing of wood by Giovanni Bellini pictured in our National Gallery (a picture to haunt one); while the woman—not singing to him, but to the stalls—flung out her agony in a Verdi *cavatina*—I shall never forget.

But the modern ordinances of Italian Opera, including Verdi's *cavatina*, will have everything done twice—will have the agony all over again—and, that the *prima donna* may take rest (because her agony must be more agonised the second than the first time), the stupid form is that of making a loud noise during several bars—a poor imitation of Signor Rossini's poor fillings-up.

During this pause, the hands off, the Doge were unclenched from the elbows of his chair. He looked sad, weary, weak—leaned back, as if himself ready to give up the ghost; but when the woman, after the allotted bars of noise, began again her second-time agony, it was wondrous to see how the old Sovereign turned in his chair, with the regal endurance of one who says, "I must endure to the end," and again gathered his own misery into his old father's heart, and shut it up close till the woman had ended. Unable to grant her petition—unable to free his son—after such a scene, the aged man, when left alone, could only rave, till his heart broke. Signor Ronconi's Doge is not to be forgotten by those who do not treat Art as a toy, or the singer's art as something entirely distinct from dramatic truth.

Then, how is it to be forgotten that this Doge was presented by the same man whose quack-doctor in "Elisir" showed that wondrous, professionally-haggard charlatan, Dulcamara—more of a machine than a human being—glib, miserable, worn out; yet unable to be quiet for a single second? The



MADAME GEORGINA BURNS.

From a photograph by CHANCELLOR, Dublin.



lean quack, and the horrible horse, and the shabby chaise, and the utterly disresponsible puffery of the man and his drugs, by the very creature who, obviously, had the least belief in their efficacy, as might be heard in the monotone of his voice (and the horse and the chaise were, obviously, inventions of Signor Ronconi's)—make up a whole, almost unique in farce opera.

Almost—yet not altogether so; because I cannot help commemorating the starved, miserable poet in "Matilda di Shabran"—a wretched droll, belonging to low Italian farce, but somehow patched up by this great Southern man into a character;—without recalling his Papageno, in "Die Zauberflöte"—not

"The poor bird-boy with his roasted sloes,"

be-sung by Bloomfield—but the bird-creature—half man, half parakeet—who could charm the bird from the tree (as Mrs. Hardcastle said of Tony Lumpkin).—Anything more utterly ridiculous can never have been conceived or executed than this presentation so carried out.

I recall these examples, because they will perhaps be among the less familiar of those by which the versatility of this remarkable artist is proved. One could write a page on his Barber in Signor Rossini's master-work; a paragraph on his Duke in "Lucrezia Borgia;" an exhibition of dangerous, suspicious, sinister malice, such as the stage has rarely shown; another on his Podesta in "La Gazza Ladra" (in these two characters bringing him into close rivalry with Lablache—a rivalry from which he issued unharmed); and last, and almost best, of his creations, is Masetto (as signal a success as his Don Juan had been a signal mistake—one of his two mistakes, the other being Guillaume Tell)—if the matter in hand was a complete history. But, fortunately, this is not a thing possible to be produced here—Signor Ronconi being, happily for Tragedy and Comedy, still on the stage."

THE OLD MASTERS.

In the Old Masters' Exhibition the art critic finds a difficult task. It is by no means easy in the first place to criticise, and be satisfied with one's criticism on works which have a reputation of being superlative in every quality; and secondly, the critic is at the mercy of two distinct sects, both so convinced as to be unapproachable with a view of conviction by any tenet not already their own. The art world is distinctly divided. On the one hand artists and amateurs share the opinion that whatever has resisted the criticism of centuries must contain an intrinsic value; on the other, it is asserted by a fast growing body that the old masters are nought but tricksters or ignoramuses whose fame is based upon tradition alone. It is uncertain, at first sight, which opinion should be favoured in an endeavour to be just; for, considering the question, we find that both parties are in possession of some truth, and that phases of both sentiments must be united before we can arrive at a true estimation of such works as those under notice. It is a well-established fact that truth alone can resist the criticism of generations and withstand all the attacks which time allows to accumulate. However great may be the attraction of meretricious work its charms soon fade; and two or three generations at the most suffice to deprive it of all its pleasing glitter. As fashions change so do those lighter whims and imagined sentiments of a public alter with them. The former puritan now begins to speak ethically, the erstwhile moralist now prates of social contracts, and ever and anon it becomes fashionable to believe in nothing at all—at any rate before company. And yet there are existing works expressive of thoughts or of sentiments which have come down to us unaltered and accepted through all the periodical changes in the world's fashions of thought and of feeling. Has there been in history any period when Homer has been flung aside as not in accordance with the hour's mood? Has Shakespeare ever been unfashionable? Have not Mozart and Handel found at every period since the date of their works' production an audience who listen delightedly, although many desire to make allowance for the date of their work? With the exception of those iconoclasts whose theories were born in an hour and died in two has Greek sculpture ever found enemies? And yet it is possible to point to hundreds of artists whose work is, if still remembered, now unsought. Is it then to be otherwise with painting, and if so what can be the reason? Is it possible, or even probable, that while truth has been found by some one worker in each of the sister arts painting alone should have no exponent of that beauty which Keats identifies with truth? It is not probable, and it is not a fact. Let us consider the reasons offered most frequently in depreciation of the old masters, and we find that their con-

ventionality and consequent untruth is their chief fault. So far so good. We will grant that every old master yielded more or less to convention. But are we so far without sin as to be able to cast scorn in their teeth? Have we not at the present day the convention of the Impressionist, and is not the square touch of the Newlyn School more or less a convention, while there still lingers in the hands of one or two accepted painters the convention of the Pre-Raphaelite? Indeed, convention would appear to be natural to all artists: the very fact that all workers are compelled to express their thoughts in similar media is already a consent to the convention imposed upon them by the medium each selects. That conventional arrangements for the record of impressions are natural to all beginners is surely to be believed, from the fact that all children conventionalise when attempting to draw. Examine the scribbling of nine children out of ten and what do we find? A near approach to a circle represents a face: features are marked by means of lesser circles: a perpendicular and an oblong for eyes, nose, and mouth respectively. The form of the body is oblong, and two simply perpendicular legs are finished off with pyramidal feet. The arms and hands can be better imagined than described; suffice it to say that they invariably take similar forms. Childish as this reference may seem, it is undeniable that it forms a safe basis for argument, since, if we compare the very earliest works extant, we find throughout, a strong similarity in the agreeable processes selected to render easy the record of complex impressions. As the art has grown older so have conventions become less and less marked, but they are not yet done with nor do we even see a reasonable hope of their being altogether avoided in the near future, newer forms being all that we can look forward to. So much for the manner of representing; the matter for representation is now much the same as it was in the day of Raphael, and in the day of Zeuxis also Human affections, giving rise to various forms of dramatic action, portraiture, and at a later date landscape and the sea, have afforded subjects to painters in the past just as at the present day, not forgetting the subjects selected by the ever present class of imitative painters, who delight in anything from a cabbage to a court beauty, with perhaps a preference for the cabbage. It is in the feeling for the subject that the truth lies, and it would be a difficult task to prove that our feelings now are truer than were those of our ancestors.

Without doubt we are making some advance in the direction of truth in our records of natural appearances; our pictures for the most part contain higher and more natural lights than do those of the majority of old masters; while we pay more respectful attention to those "accidents" which nature so frequently puts before us, and the beauty of which the older painters were content to despise. It is only in minor details, however, that we have progressed; the trees in our landscapes are far more like the trees of nature in form and texture than were those of Gainsborough, Morland, or Wilson; but do we find in our modern pictures a more earnest appreciation of those sentiments inspired by nature than is present in the earlier works? We think not. Let us take for example Wilson's view of "Sion House" (No. 137), in the third gallery, and we find a record of quiet landscape under a warmly glowing sky full of feeling for light, warmth, and the peacefulness with which such a scene inspires us. The mannerism, certainly, is marked, but when we glance at the Constable which hangs close by, "Dedham Lock," No. 132, we cannot say that that is free from manner. While Wilson delights in the repose of sunlit landscape, Constable rejoices in the hurry and bluster of a country rustling under the motion of a fresh breeze, with a sky crossed by masses of driving grey cloud. Both men were happy in the love of their subject, and as Constable advanced in his treatment, so we have progressed since; but our improvement is by no means so marked that we can afford to despise the work of those pioneers who first broke the soil for us. As for portraiture, it is difficult to determine the exact advance, assuming that we have advanced. It is there less easily recognised than in the case of landscape painting. Tradition certainly exercises much power in favour of good fame, but it is certain that there have been good portraits and bad for the past three hundred years. Alas for the critic when a painter of former ages is identified as belonging to a school of the present day. We are told that Velasquez is king of Impressionists; we examine his portrait of the Duke of Bedford, No. 133, and are astonished to find in the face a contrast of light and shade so forced that it would bring the severest criticism upon the head of a modern painter. The Duke is represented as standing in almost full daylight, and yet the shadows in the face are nearly as dark as those on his grey silk hose, and when we look round the room we can find in no face present, a shadow which renders the flesh so dark as to compete in

strength with the shadows in the folds of ordinarily light clothing. Rembrandt's portrait (No. 145), which shows the painter looking towards the spectator, the light full on his head, contains no such vivid contrast and no shadow so dark, although the light tone of the flesh is darker than that of Velasquez' subject. Yet we know that Rembrandt arranged his lights in such a way as to benefit by the contrasts to the full extent. What does the impressionist say to this? The flesh tones in the "Venus and Cupid" (No. 135) are, indeed, a triumph for the great Spaniard; but the beauty of the Ideal is wanting; the position of the reclining Venus, however natural, is not beautiful; barely one good line in the figure is brought out, although the nude female figure abounds in curves and graceful outlines which can be expressed to advantage with very little arrangement. If light be the great desideratum, is there not plenty of it in Van Dyck's portrait of the Duke of Sutherland, and does not broad work also characterise this picture? Why then should we squabble continually over the excellence of the old masters *en masse* as compared with our excellence in the present day? Truly much of their work is indifferent; but then how well this remark might apply to a nineteenth century academy, or even a "younger school" exhibition. There are works of all kinds belonging to the different periods of art's history, and any modern critic or painter with a fad or a prejudice can find some ground for sympathy with the working of one or another of the older men. Those artists who delight in painting for painting's sake, who wish to sing no song, but wield the brush merely that they may revel in their imitative skill, can find vast fields for admiration in the *genre* work of the Dutch school. Look, for instance, at Teniers' "Woman peeling turnips." Here surely is a glorious work! with a subject from which no story can be drawn by the most fertile brain. How many of the "advanced men" are there who will sympathise? True, it is not a story picture, and is therefore to be praised, but they will tell you it has no light. And all being considered the whole secret would seem to be contained in the fact that perfection has not been yet arrived at. Each painter or amateur in the present day is seeking for absolute perfection, and is disgusted because it cannot be found in the works of men who have not had the advantage of studying their own faults, as we have been able to study them, and profit by our experience. Therefore is it that old masters are by some condemned without mercy. The reason of the intense admiration for them of others can be found in the fact that too many admirers of pictures, amateurs who will judge a painter's work without scruple, and find beauty in everything that pleases and fault in all that they do not understand, are content to look at pictures alone and waste no single glance upon that nature which the works depend upon for their beauty. If picture lovers would but study nature, and bear in mind that records of natural appearances are the object of the painter, the art-critic would be less in request, and painters themselves would benefit by the cultivation of general taste, no longer led this way or that at the critic's own sweet will. Who could help enjoying such a work as Romney's portrait of the Marchioness of Hertford? (No. 13 in the catalogue of the present exhibition). Critics of the New School will say that it is too dark, and the shadow tones are unnatural; critics of the Old will speak with enthusiasm of the breadth of treatment and warmth of colour; while the unbiassed spectator will delight in the unpretentious attempt to represent a handsome woman with due feeling for the warmth of life which animates her cheek, and gives expression to her eye, regretting that it is not quite light enough to be absolutely natural, and yet thankful that the painter has avoided a death-like chalkiness in an attempt to reproduce all natural effects of light. Sir Edward Landseer's portrait of a white terrier, "Jocko," who is represented standing over a hedgehog, does not admit of much ideal beauty; it is pure imitation, and as such is successful enough to gladden the heart of a dog lover. Texture and action are both present; the animal looks as if he would feel soft and warm to the touch, and the position is more suggestive of life than is usual in animal pictures. Turner's portrait of Robert Williams, a Cumberland Fleet celebrity, is interesting as helping to dispel the idea that Turner was a mere trickster, whose power lay in juggled landscapes. The work is rough, but the portrait has every appearance of being truthful. Danby's picture, "Grave of the Excommunicated," is a good example also to illustrate the fact that earlier painters than ourselves have possessed all our feeling and in many cases all our skill. The moonlit heath, overhung by a sky ragged with driving cloud, is recorded with as much truth of tone as we have found in renderings of similar subjects by painters of to-day, while

the appreciation of the scene's character is clearly visible in the opportunities which are seized throughout the work, of conveying to the spectator's mind the impression of a rough gale as an accompaniment to the uncanny darkness. Constable's two unfinished pictures of Brighton and the Vale of Stour, Nos. 55 and 59 respectively, speak in forcible manner of that painter's love of breeziness, and contain some hints of very delicate colouring.

In conclusion we may say that the exhibition is not the best of the Old Masters' series, but is worthy a visit by all who really care to place the painters of the past in their proper position relative to the painters of to-day.

W. P.

LAID UP.—II.

BY F. CORDER.

(Continued from page 31.)

DEC. 29, MORNING.—I slowly awake, with a general impression of never having slept a wink. Yells of milk boys in the street striving to execute a *jodel* and miserably failing, though they practice daily for years. Peculiar cry of the newspaper boys, who have discovered that by endeavouring to pronounce the consonantal sounds "rng" at the back of the palate their call of "pa-p(rng)er!" can be made to project itself for a phenomenal distance through the air. (Mem: direct the attention of acousticians to this peculiar fact.) While I am at breakfast comes the usual Saturday brass band, which has lately taken to playing hymns, and pretending to be the Waits. I desire the servant to uncork my last new bottle of medicine, and set it upon the front door step. That ought to stop them. Yes, the odour is beyond the endurance of even German nostrils. They move further down the street and resume the Advent hymn in four keys. Bravo, doctor! Child next door is going over her old pieces, presumably in view of a school party or concert at which she will be expected to show off. Heaven help her audience! At 10 appears the first piano organ, evidently much affected by the fog. I direct the servant to take the medicine bottle from the steps and present it to the organist, with directions to share it with his instrument. It has been stolen; perhaps by one of the German band. May his face be turned upside down and dogs defile the grave of his mother-in-law! I send out another bottle. Organist receives it with a pleasant grin (he would grin if you cut his head off) and retires. Half an hour of comparative peace ensues—for I don't count the child next door—during which I scrawl these jottings and then endeavour to compose something. No use; instantly pops up that tormenting *idée fixe*,



which is evidently going to make me its victim all day again. In spite of my determination I have not yet found out his name nor where he lives.

12 A.M.—Here come three Savoyards. Hurrah! just the men I wanted. I have seen them twice before, but never heard them. One plays a sort of rough oboe (Musette), another plays the jim-jams (various instruments of percussion affixed to different parts of his body), and the third performs upon an instrument I have never read of or seen described. It is a *double bass bagpipe*, having an 8-foot drone. The effect is really grand, and would be better still in combination with several others of ordinary size. The bellows is a regular young balloon, and the appearance of the instrument comic in the extreme. The Musette player is a good specimen of his class, and extemporises some very fantastic phrases, but the jim-jam man is a fraud, and from his feeble sense of rhythm I suspect him of having more German than Italian blood in him. That natural scale of the cornemuse with its two untempered notes, has a strangely wild and melancholy character of its own.



I wonder why it appeals so strongly to certain feelings of my heart, while purely barbarous music and sometimes the highest forms of civilized music, too, will fail to stir me? Still, the Savoyards soon grow monotonous,

and invalids are impatient. Emma, tell those fellows if they don't move on I shall shoot Cockle's pills at them with a pea-shooter! . . . They are gone.

How powerful is the art of medicine, properly applied!

7 P.M.—There are premonitory symptoms of a school party next door. I hear unaccustomed laughter, trampling of feet, arrival of cabs, and generally "alarms and excursions." Yes, I shall have a lively evening of it.

7:30.—Doctor calls, and on my informing him, with perfect truth, that his physic is all gone, and that I am much better, promises to send a fresh prescription. I gently intimate that the last could be smelt across the street, and that the neighbours, under the belief that I must be dead, are sending over to inquire why my friends do not bury me. He smiles feebly, and says, "I am afraid you won't like the next bottle so well." Truly a doctor to be proud of.

8:0.—Party next door begins—with a hymn! Somebody plays the tune on the piano in that peculiar arpeggiando style believed to be indicated by the word *religioso*. Faint sounds of treble voices come through the wall, and a kind of "lower partial tone" effect produced by some clergyman endeavouring to sing the tune two octaves lower. Games follow, then some of the feeblest singing and playing I have ever heard, even at a school party; then, when this dissipation has raised the spirits of the elders beyond propriety-pitch, the orgie culminates in a dance. One of the governesses plays, in traditional style, a jumble of odds and ends of many waltzes, old and new. The only individuality which marks her playing is, that every eighth bar is shorn of one of its crotchets, becoming 2-4 time. This makes no difference whatever to the dancers, who romp, romp, romp with tireless feet in quite a different time to the music. I am reminded of an incident of my youth, a time when I was called upon to play dance music for a Christmas party and failed ignominiously. It seemed to me that no power on earth could keep the dancers together, for there were young guardsmen with yards of leg and toddling children with none at all to speak of. But a young lady relative (whose playing I loathed) took my place at the piano with a superior smile, and in a trice everyone fell into the droning swing of her waltz, while whether I played fast or slow there was always somebody shouting out "slower!" or "faster!" So there is an art in playing dance music, as in most things; but this governess hasn't got it. There is also—or was—an art in dancing, but it seems to me to be all but extinct. Where are the Varsoviana, Redowa, Sicilienne, the Caledonians, and Russian quadrille? All swallowed by the Waltz! Few people now know anything at all besides this one dance, and even that they don't really know. A young couple once boasted to me that they had waltzed through an entire ball-programme, galops, polkas, quadrilles and all. I inquired how they managed with "Sir Roger." "Oh, they didn't have that, of course, or else we should have waltzed it too!" was the answer. This sort of thing, perhaps, is one of the reasons why many young ladies who learn the piano cannot distinguish—or feel no desire to distinguish—between duple and triple time. It is to me one of the strangest of musical phenomena to see—as you may at any time—people dancing to music, yet dancing in quite a different rhythm and pace.

11:0.—That governess has certainly earned her supper. Her last quadrille was a masterpiece, if somewhat redolent of negus—or something stronger. Would I had a phonograph to embalm it withal! I could almost find it in my heart to send her the new bottle of medicine which I smell on its way to my room. (No, Emma! Put it in the back yard to keep the cats quiet). In playing dance-music three chords only, of course, are necessary, but, like a street harpist, she contrives to change her harmony exactly in the wrong place. "All's well that ends well," however, and the turmoil has at length ceased. A kind of lethargic peace reigns for awhile—then I begin to be conscious of a presence, and my demon phrase whines out dolefully to my inner ear. The next moment a rush of joy fills my mind, for without any apparent connecting thread the solution of the tormenting puzzle comes upon me, and I remember how, when, and where I heard that scrap of music.

Nine years ago the Chinese giant Chang was on view at the Brighton Aquarium. He was attended by a native musician, said to be a really great artist, who played very curiously upon a kind of viol. Amid unintelligible whinnings, mewings, twitterings, and scrapings there emerged ever and anon from this Chinese Joachim's music the little phrase I have quoted. I listened, and with deep interest, but could glean absolutely nothing more than this single *leit motif*. Odd that it should have lain all this time stowed away in my head; odder that it should have trotted itself out just now in particular; but oddest of all how I managed to identify it

again. Now the theme ceases to haunt me, and I feel that I shall really sleep. Emma! next time the doctor calls tell him I have gone out for a long walk. Yes, I am greatly better, thank you!

REVIEWS.

MUSIC.

From EDWIN ASHDOWN.

Cahier 1, "Esquisses Posthumes," containing three pieces—Cahier 2, six préludes; Cahier 3, three suites—No. 1, "Ländlers and Valses;" 2, six morceaux à trois temps; 3, six morceaux à trois temps, pour piano de Stephen Heller. Mises en ordre and terminées, par H. Barbedette.—It would have been a pity if these posthumous works by the well-known composer of the "Promenades d'un Solitaire," and the "Nuits Blanches" had remained unpublished, and so lost to the world. The first and second "Cahiers" have more of the étude character about them than the third, which is devoted to dance rhythms of the Schubert and Brahms type, for whose compositions they form an excellent preparation. Always melodious and never commonplace, beautifully harmonised, and abounding in rhythmic variety, they will not only please young students but help greatly in the acquirement of delicacy, equal phrasing-power in both hands, and general precision. No small merit is involved in the fact that not one of the pieces is in the least tiring, either physically or emotionally. Stephen Heller had the happy faculty of developing his themes sufficiently, and yet knowing exactly when to stop.

From PITT and HATZFELD.

Album of six songs, with German and English words; music by Benno Schönberger. Those who have heard Herr Schönberger play can best form an idea of his compositions. The same spontaneity, restrained vehemence, and evidence of deep feeling characterise both his performances and his writings. No. 1 of this collection, "My Love I hear," is a passionate song, treated in a somewhat Wagnerian style; No. 2, "O is it thus we part," and No. 3, "O lay thy cheek," are very tender and expressive; No. 4, "While gazing in thine eyes," is more ardent; while No. 5, "A fatal gift," has caught a glow of humour from the words; and No. 6, "My soul will its sorrow" is as delicate a fancy as the poem. The accompaniments are full and florid, and the harmonies rich, while some of the progressions are not only unconventional but daring. Singers who can successfully interpret refined emotional songs will doubtless be well pleased with these specimens. It may be added that F. B. Wyatt-Smith is the translator of four of the poems, which are all from Uhland and Heine.

From NOVELLO, EWER, and Co.

Six two-part songs for solo voices (or female chorus), with piano accompaniment, composed by Charles Wood.—The words are selected from the poems of Milton, Herrick, Julian Fane, John Fletcher, Walter Scott, and Shakespeare. Verses from such poets certainly merit worthy musical representation, and they have as certainly obtained it in the present instance. The spirit of each verse is most happily caught, the melodies are unbackneyed, the rhythms varied, and the hand of the cultured musician is discernible in every page.

From FORSYTH BROS.

"The Pageant." Cantata for female voices, written and composed by Frank J. Sawyer, Mus. Doc. Oxon.—A bright and effective little work, the music of which has an old-fashioned ring about it well in keeping with the subject.

"The Flower Pilgrims." Cantata for female voices, words by Clifton Bingham, music by Alfred Redhead, consists of flowing and graceful airs, duets, and choruses supposed to be sung by village maidens bringing floral offerings to their patron Saint.

From J. CURWEN and SONS.

"The Boyhood of Christ," a sacred cantata, the music, "adapted to the voices of boys and girls," composed by Albrecht Brede, the words compiled by M. Krummacher, and translated into English by A. J. Foxwell. This example thoroughly fulfils its purpose, and is above the average merit; it requires three soprano and two contralto soloists, for whom interesting airs are provided. The choruses and chorales are written in a very devotional spirit, and well harmonised.

The Dramatic World.

"THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL."

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 15TH JANUARY, 1890.

MY DEAR MR. FIELDHOUSE,—

There is to me a double enjoyment in witnessing those of the old comedies that are still actually enjoyed. There is the pleasure of seeing a good play—for it is only the good ones that we see:

The evil that men do lives after them, but their bad plays fortunately do not. And, moreover, there is the pleasure that we share with the author; we can't but sympathise with his honest satisfaction in the mirth he is providing for lads and lasses whose grandfathers were unborn in his day. Most keenly of all I have felt this when "As You Like It"—youngest of all comedies ever written—has held the stage; but it came over me very freshly when last year Mr. Tree gave us that delightful performance of the perennial farce of "Falstaff" at the Haymarket; and I have known it many a time when "She Stoops to Conquer"—as true as Shakespeare—or "The School for Scandal," or "The Rivals," has been the play (but this last needs very good acting). Nor has the hearty fun of the "Heir at Law" been too broad to stir my sympathy with its graceless author; for I am not one of your finikin playgoers. I only regret, indeed, that more of the good old plays—the bad I would leave severely alone—are not still to be seen on our London stages; but to-day we are indeed a nation of shopkeepers, in some matters. Two or three old comedies are known to all, and therefore "pay;" the rest we leave alone. Even as we do our best to spread the belief that Handel wrote the "Messiah" and "Israel in Egypt," and then left off, so we practically teach that there were no dramatists before the nineteenth century except Shakespeare, Sheridan, and Goldsmith: and that the latter couple wrote just three plays between them. 'Tis pity. They do not order matters thus in France, nor even in Germany—where, having no old dramatists, they borrow ours.

However, "The School for Scandal" we have always with us, and the Screen Scene is a joy for ever. There is a splendid vitality about these fine gentlemen, with all their stateliness, these fops and *dilettanti*, with all their frippery and their conceits; and when the great dramatic scene comes, the real art of the puissant playwright—the same, in essentials, from Shakespeare to Ibsen—compels all hearers with its force, its science, its living interest. Sheridan here shows that he has the true creative power. Not only is his scene built up with more than the instinct of a Sardou, but the language—if here and there not without trick—rises to true dignity where the humanity of the situation asks for it. Lady Teazle's words to Joseph Surface and her husband, after the fatal screen has fallen—magnificent moment, when comedy and tragedy contend!—these have in them all the simple force of genuine uprightness, repentance, shame and indignation mingled.

There is little wonder that this masterpiece has been revived, to fill an awkward interval at the theatre, where once, played for a benefit, it was so warmly welcomed that it ran a year and more. It was a notable cast, that of the first Vaudeville performance of "The School;" and another very notable one—if with a very weak point or two (two was the number, I think)—was that at the Prince of Wales's, somewhere about five years ago, I suppose.

Indeed, if one could have combined these two casts—and added a really fine Lady Teazle, which neither possessed—a performance so magnificent would have been obtained that one might with some confidence have asked Sheridan himself whether King and Palmer

and all their troupe could have eclipsed it. Two parts were played to sheer perfection, I shall always think: Joseph Surface at the Vaudeville, by that splendid tragedian, that splendid comedian, John Clayton—handsome, insinuating, sensual, intellectual, full of power as full of humour, dominating the entire play: Charles Surface, at the Prince of Wales's (and, even better, at the old Prince of Wales's, with the Bancrofts), by Coghlan—the only Charles who could have stood shoulder to shoulder with Clayton's Joseph, and hardly feared the rivalry—the full-blooded, magnificent rake, splendid in face, voice, and person, mocking, impertinent, yet a gentleman ever, not for a moment heartless or offensive in the most difficult scene of all, perhaps the most difficult scene ever written.

Sir Peter, too, as played latterly by Mr. Farren, had become a performance of rare vigour and humour; not remarkable for its tenderness perhaps, but by no means without it; unapproachable, certainly, by any other Sir Peter on the stage. Then—not to convert these memories into a catalogue *raisonné*—there were the rotund, mature, vigorous, unrivalled Sir Oliver of Mr. Everill: the excellent, if a trifle overdone, foppery of Lin Rayne as Sir Benjamin: and the firm, telling, caustic Crabtree of Mr. Thomas Thorne. The ladies were never striking; but there was at least one "Mrs. Candour" of merit.

Why do I tell you so much of these "Schools for Scandal" of the recent past, as a long prelude to a short review of that of the present? Is it by way of criticising the critics, and showing with what a standard in their mind they cannot but approach this—of necessity—hastily-prepared revival at Mr. Thorne's little theatre? Perhaps it is; and indeed I think that such criticism is not uncalled for.

We must remember that the Vaudeville—like the Haymarket, the Garrick, even the Lyceum—is *not* the Théâtre Français. With Mr. Thorne away, his brother is the only one of the permanent company of whom we have any right, in these days, to expect a knowledge of the stock pieces. The more is the pity—but we must remember the facts, when we judge this presentation, at a week's notice, of the great comedy that we know so well. We must not expect it to compare with the presentations of which I have just spoken; and we should be very willing to give to its general intelligence and smoothness the credit they so well deserve.

The performance splits itself pretty evenly into two classes, *plus* one exception; the exception being Miss Winifred Emery, whose Lady Teazle has been so universally praised that I will say only that it is among the very best that this generation has seen.

My "two classes" are the eternal ones of old and new—the new often lacking the merits of the old, the old those of the new: which is not unnatural. To the old, old school belong the Sir Peter Teazle of Mr. Maclean and the Sir Oliver of Mr. Blythe, both vigorous but neither good—the latter, indeed, far too boisterous. Much better are the very telling Crabtree of Mr. Grove and the Mrs. Candour of Miss Coralie Owen; while Mr. Fred. Thorne's Moses—in which one expected to find "the traditions" vigorously brought out—was almost too studiously moderate. On the other hand Mr. Harbury's Rowley—though played with intelligence and vigour—was too familiar and too prominent.

Several of the minor young gentlemen were new with the newness which takes the form of pure Cockneyhood, and which should at once be hanged, drawn, and quartered; but Mr. Gilmore's Sir Benjamin was pleasant, and needed only confidence.

Newer, in the true sense, was Mr. Thalberg's Charles; and newest Mr. Cyril Maude's Joseph. Mr. Thalberg I have not seen before; he seems to me full of promise, intelligence, and charm.

He is not yet a Coghlan—how could he be?—but it is quite possible that he may be one day a Montague.

And Mr. Maude is a remarkable young actor, who should one of these days—but not this year or next—play Joseph very finely indeed, if he but has the chance to practise his art *en grand*. He has imagination, intelligence, enthusiasm; he needs only to train his voice and figure, to learn moderation, variety, and true vigour—in a word, the mysteries of the actor's art.

But where shall he go nowadays to learn them, my dear Mr. Fieldmouse: who can tell him this?

Not certainly, for one, his well-wisher, your faithful

MUS IN URBE.

THE DRAMATISTS.

XIX.—KWAN-HAN-KING.

It is little to the credit of our literature that it should be so nearly silent with regard to perhaps the most famous, certainly the most prolific, of the classic dramatists of the greatest nation in the world—speaking literally. Open the best of our encyclopædias at the letter K, and you will find no mention of Kwan-han-king; yet he was a famous dramatist two centuries before Shakespeare was born, when the British theatre could show no work of art more elaborate than the roughest of "mysteries."

What history of their chief playwright is preserved in China we know not; his life and all his works may be chronicled in *Yuen-jin-pé-tchong* (the "Hundred Dramas of Mongol Life"), and we can only recommend our readers to look there. From European sources we merely learn that he was the most fertile of the writers of the last, and greatest, of the three epochs into which Chinese dramatic literature may be divided. The first of these comprises the plays written during the dynasty of the Thangs, from 720 A.D. till the beginning of the five little dynasties, about the year 905. From the fall of the Thangs to the rise of the Songs Chinese history is a barbarous monotony of bloodshed, in which the "joys of peace and prosperity"—as the Chinese call their plays—had disappeared entirely.

The second epoch was the Song dynasty, from 960 A.D. to 1119; and the third contained all the plays written under the dynasties of Kin and of Yuen (A.D. 1123—1341). As Kwan-han-king flourished in the days of Yuen, we may put him down as having lived in or about the year 1300. In the dynasty of Yuen five hundred and sixty-four plays are recorded to have been produced, and these are classified—for the Chinese must classify everything—as pieces by authors whose names are known (448), pieces by unknown authors (105), and pieces by courtesans (11). It must be understood that in China there was—and probably is, for things are not wont to change there—a distinct order of highly-cultivated ladies of the class of Aspasias.

Kwan-han-king was the author of no less than sixty of these 564 plays, and twelve of his works are still in existence. Of these the greater number are comedies of intrigue, which in China very often turn upon the doings of courtesans, and of which the jokes are not always like those of Mr. Gilbert's hero, "in the best possible taste." Among these are "The Forced Marriage," "The Mirror of Jade," "The Learned Courtesan," "The Courtesan Saved," and "The Pavilion of Pleasure." He was also not above founding a play on a *cause célèbre*; one of his best-known works is a judicial drama of this kind, *Teon-ngo-yuen*, "The Revenge of Teon-ngo," and another was "The Dream of Pao-kong."

To the Chinese, as to the Indians, pure tragedy was unknown; all the works of Kwan-han-king and his fellows admit scenes of comedy into the most melancholy stories. The unities of time and place are trampled upon so ruthlessly that one almost pities the poor old tyrants, sitting feeble and sulky by the wayside, like the Giants Pope and Pagan in Bunyan. Your Chinaman will take you fairly through his hero's life, though that should last forty or fifty years, and he changes his scene every five minutes or oftener—one act will pass in heaven, the next on earth; a few steps by one of the characters indicate that he has taken a journey, and you have only his word for it that he is indoors or out of doors, at home or in the open country. There is no scenery, but the dresses are of the period to which the play belongs, and are sometimes very magnificent. The actors are highly paid, but entirely despised; they are bought as children, to be trained for the stage, and are not allowed to enter for the examinations for the rank of

mandarin—a token of their low repute which would hardly keep young men from the stage in England. There are no actresses—the parts of women are played by boys—but ladies are allowed to see the plays from behind a lattice.

Every regular play is divided into four acts, the first of which is usually preceded by a kind of prologue, in which the principal characters give their names, parentage, birthplace, and quality, and sketch the subject of the play and the events which have preceded the rise of the curtain—if curtain there be in China.

All classes of society are introduced in the Chinese drama—emperors, civil and military mandarins, doctors, labourers, boatmen, and courtesans, and even gods and goddesses associating in the most friendly way with mortals.

By way of pointing his moral a very curious feature has been introduced by the Celestial dramatist: the "Singing Character," who distinguishes the Chinese theatre from all others. Like the chorus of the Greek stage, the Singing Character comments to the audience on the actions which are taking place before it, chanting his reflections (to a great number of melodies, apparently a different one for each snatch of morality); only, unlike the Chorus, he is no mere spectator of the play, but its hero or heroine—who, after each doleful event, remains on the stage to rouse the sympathies of the lookers-on, to cite appropriate maxims from the sages, or to adduce examples of like sufferings from history or mythology. If this principal person should die during the progress of the play, one of the others succeeds to his place as Singing Character.

We have been unable to find any confirmation of the popular belief that Chinese dramas are of enormous length. Of those translated into French by M. Bazin not one is, probably, so long as "Hamlet;" though the fact that a great part of a play was sung would of course largely extend its time of performance.

Finally, let us confess that the masterpieces of Kwan-han-king and his brethren are works of astounding crudity: mere barbaric curiosities—yet even on that account, perhaps, the more valuable and interesting to us.

PRIESTS AND PLAYERS.

BY H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

Changes are constantly taking place even in things which seem unchangeable; and the attitude of the Church in France towards actors and actresses is no longer what it was in the early part of the century, when, from the mere fact of their being stage-players, they were excommunicated persons. One cannot think, however, of any country but France where the actor was so completely under ban that his remains could not be buried in consecrated ground. In England the law did for him what the Church long before had done in France; placed him, that is to say, beyond the pale of honest people by classing him with rogues and vagabonds. Practically, however, actors have always in this country been judged by their conduct and demeanour; and it was only under the Commonwealth that their performances were in England absolutely proscribed: an exception being made in the case of musical performances on the well-known ground that "being given in an unknown tongue they could not corrupt the morals of the people." The delivery of most English singers in those days, as in these, was probably marked by a defective enunciation. Otherwise they might easily enough, had any such intention been entertained, have corrupted the public morals. Voltaire, visiting England in the middle of the eighteenth century, was much struck by the esteem in which actors and actresses of good character were held among the English; and in one of his later letters he sets forth with great satisfaction that "the celebrated Oldfield" has been honoured with a tomb in Westminster Abbey.

It cannot, however, be said that in England, or, indeed, in any country, the Church has taken a favourable view of the stage. Not many years ago Cardinal Manning declared at a public meeting that, "from the Italian Opera to the penny gaff theatres were all links in one long devil's chain." There are, nevertheless, good reasons for believing that while holding this view generally His Eminence does not apply it in individual cases. Nor, we may be sure, at any time, if an actor sought the offices of the Church would they have been refused to him on the ground of his belonging to an excommunicated profession. He would have been called upon, however, to abandon that profession, as towards the end of the eighteenth century happened to the famous Mile. Clairon, who was warned by her

confessor that if she remained on the stage she was in danger of eternal punishment. The actress retired for a time to a convent, but came out again on the summons of the King, who threatened her with imprisonment if she persisted in her anti-theatrical ideas. "The case of this lady is somewhat hard," it was said. "The King sends her to prison if she does not act, and the priest to perdition if she does." The view of the stage still taken by the French clergy, if not by the Roman Catholic clergy generally, is that of Bossuet, as expressed in his celebrated "Lettre sur les spectacles." A priest, who had never attended a theatre, having written an essay on the subject of stage plays, for which he had conceived a certain admiration, was reproved by Bossuet, as bishop of his diocese. "The object of theatrical entertainments," wrote the Eagle of Meaux, "is to dispel that gloom which forms the very substance of human life, and which can be driven away, not by frivolous amusements, but only by meditation and prayer." Bossuet pointed out, moreover, that all plays turned upon the "dangerous passion of love," and when the priest ventured to submit that there were dramas in which there was no question of love, replied, with much point, that such plays must be "exceedingly dull."

Apart, however, from the views of particular priests and prelates, the actor in France was formally excommunicated at the Council of Arles held nearly sixteen centuries ago (Anno. 315) in presence of Pope Sylvester and the Emperor Constantine. By the fifth of the articles adopted by the council, actors were distinctly excommunicated, and the Abbé Guettée, who cites the article in his "Histoire de l'Eglise de France" (Paris, 1847, Vol. I., page 64), exclaims triumphantly on the subject: "The Church, then, has never tolerated theatres and spectacles—those schools of immorality and corruption."

In the first ages of Christianity the stage was probably Pagan, and the decree pronounced by the Council of Arles against actors is said to have been due to the anti-Christian character of their performances. However that may be, the excommunication pronounced against the stage by the Council of Arles has never been revoked. Mr. F. C. Burnand has told us, in a highly interesting article on this subject which he contributed a few years ago to the "Fortnightly Review," that when, in 1848, a deputation of actors waited upon Monsieur Affre, Archbishop of Paris, to beg that the ban which weighed upon their profession might be raised, the Archbishop replied that the ban could not be raised because it did not exist. It is difficult, indeed, to understand how a decree pronounced nearly sixteen hundred years ago at Arles should have force in the present day at Paris. The Abbé Guettée, nevertheless, declares, as we have seen, that the Church "has never tolerated theatres and spectacles;" and the book on which he makes this formal assertion was published only one year before Monseigneur Affre's formal denial that actors, as such, were excommunicated.

The Abbé Guettée's History, however, is the history of the Church of France, not of the Church Universal; and whatever the effect of the decree pronounced at Arles may have been in France, it does not seem to have been acted upon in other Catholic countries. Even in France, moreover, the stage, tolerated or not, was at one time controlled by the Church, which in the middle ages and down to the rise of the modern drama, as perfected in France by Corneille, exercised a censorship over all dramatic performances.

The view taken of the matter by Mdlle. Clairon's confessor was simply that dramatic performances and all who took part in them were condemned by the Church. "It was not to be wondered at," wrote one of Mdlle. Clairon's friends and champions, "that the primitive Father of the Church anathematised those authors and actors of their time who were not only pagans but open profaners of the true religion." But why, it was asked, should that excommunication still exist in France against a set of persons who were neither pagans nor profaners of religion, who acted plays which were filled with pure and virtuous sentiments, and in which virtue was rewarded and vice placed in its most odious light? Much more to the same effect was written and said in favour of the comedians, but all to no purpose. "The priests," writes another of Mdlle. Clairon's defenders, "stood firm to their text and would by no means give up their ancient and pious privilege of consigning to perdition everyone who had anything to do with the stage." One of the ablest of the numerous pamphlets written at this time on behalf of the players sought to prove, by the "laws and constitutions of France," that the excommunication levelled against the stage was "an unlawful and scandalous imposition." No sooner, however, did it make its appearance than it was seized and condemned to be burnt in the Place de Grève. The outrageous treatment of the pamphlet

in question provoked a new one, which, though not signed, was at once recognised as the work of Voltaire. This also found its way to the Place de Grève. Nor does Voltaire seem to have been at all astonished at its fate, for on hearing that his defence of the players had been consigned to the flames he calmly remarked that "if the hangman were presented with a complimentary copy of every work he was ordered to burn he would soon possess a handsome and valuable library."

(To be continued.)

NOTES AND NEWS.

A sad fate befell Mr. Burnand's capably written burlesque on "La Tosca" at its first performance; but the plucky critics who have given the little piece a second trial report that now all is well—Mr. Roberts knows his words! That Thursday's performance should have taken place at all shows the sad estate of modern burlesque. At the Gaiety and at kindred houses it would seem that nowadays no one is held to have less to do with the success of a burlesque than the author. Why he takes the trouble to write his dialogue in rhyme is only one degree more marvellous than why he takes the trouble to write it at all. Nobody marks him. Why should he not follow the example of the early Italian writers of comedy, and merely construct a scenario of his play, leaving the talk to be supplied by the talkers? Possibly the management would not pay him so much, though; for the mere feat of writing in verse impresses many minds as hard labour of the most exhausting kind. "I can't think how you do it," is their common criticism. "I couldn't!"

One really cannot criticise Mr. Burnand's work from its performance last Thursday, and one really is not going again! It may be said, however, that some of the puns were capital: that every now and then Miss Margaret Ayrton caught an inflection of Mrs. Beere's voice with wonderful accuracy: that the two young ladies were nice—especially to look at—that Miss Liddon (as the Queen) was funny, and that nobody else had the chance of being anything particular.

Apropos of Mr. Burnand's burlesque we have the ancient "Cockney rhyme" bugbear trotted out again, this time very vigorously, and by a writer of great ability—"W. A." of the "World," whose friends call him William Archer. Mr. Archer writes so admirably about what he understands that it is a pity to find him talking nonsense about a subject of which he is evidently physically unfitted to judge. Pronunciation—the point is not a doubtful one—is decided by the usage of the vast majority of the cultivated classes; and, in England, by that of the vast majority of cultivated Londoners. This majority has made it a rule that "ar," followed by a consonant in the same word (as in "farm," "sharp"), is pronounced absolutely as is "ah," the interjection. When Mr. Archer asserts that "cargo," "Iago," "farm O, andiamo," are imperfect rhymes, and that "we do not say 'cago'"—or, to be quite clear, "cagho"—he is mistaken. All educated Englishmen who are free from a provincial accent do. The provincial accent may be right—or, rather, it may have been right originally: but, by the only law that we can recognise, it is wrong now.

Moreover, Mr. Archer takes trouble to emphasize his own want of ear: for he strings together with equal condemnation a list of "bad rhymes," about half of which are really bad, while half are perfect. "Pester," "siesta," "stammerer," "camera," are of course true "Cockney rhymes;" but "stalks" and "forks" is a perfectly good rhyme, and "brought your" and "torture" a singularly complete one—doubly complete, indeed, for the careless speaker who would say "torchet" would also say "broughtcher," and other people would say "tort-yure" and "brought your." (No educated and non-provincial Englishman would sound the "r" in "tort," any more than he would sound the "l" in "calm"). Finally, in quoting with no special note "bah" and "are" (a shocking rhyme) Mr. Archer shows that he knows nothing of the rule as to final "r"s—a rule which is probably unwritten, but most certainly obeyed. "R" at the end of a word depends very much for its pronunciation on what follows. For example, Germans born in England generally say "fathuh" and mother" where we say "fatherand mother;" and it gives a curious effeminacy to their speech. And "r" at the

end of a line of verse, or in any emphatic position, is always pronounced—by the educated majority; here the "heavy swell" minority dissents. A good speaker, rapidly ending an impassioned peroration with a line from a famous though unknown bard, would be pretty sure to say—

We are—a merry family, weah, we ah, we are!

At the famous Théâtre du Gymnase, in Paris, has been revived one of the most vigorous and interesting of modern dramas—"Les Danischeff," in whose construction M. Dumas had some never very definitely acknowledged share. Three of the actors who played in the piece, when the Odéon company brought it to London some years ago, are now to be seen in their original parts, at the Gymnase—Messrs. Masset and Marais, as the coachman and the aristocrat, and M^{me}. Pasca, as the Russian *grande dame*: one of the first elderly parts, if we mistake not, which this fine actress played.

More influenza! Mr. Benson has had to postpone the production of the "Taming of the Shrew" to January 23rd, "owing to the fact that Mr. Hemsley, the scenic artist, and nearly all his staff are down with the prevalent epidemic."

Mr. Arthur Bourchier—the daring young amateur whose "Jaques" has won such universal liking in the provinces, and is soon to be judged by Londoners at the St. James's—was an actor of tremendous enthusiasm at Oxford. He it was who founded the University's Dramatic Society, which is soon—with the help of Alma Tadema and Lewis Wingfield—to produce Browning's "Strafford."

FOREIGN NOTES.

The influenza has made rapid spread in Italy, and has almost come to be regarded with the familiarity born of contempt. Thus, on New Year's Day, the popular buffo, Bottero, sent to all his friends a visiting-card, inscribed as follows:—"Alessandro Bottero, teacher of singing and the piano, and, for the last four days, professor of influenza!"

A new opera by a Portuguese composer, M. Freitas Gazul, has been put in rehearsal at the San Carlos Theatre, of Lisbon. The work is entitled "Frei Luiz de Souza."

After an honourable existence of nearly half a century the "Berliner Musik Zeitung" has ceased publication. Peace to its ashes!

Our Parisian contemporary, "Le Ménestrel," informs us—and we accept the information humbly—"that on Christmas Day Godefroid's 'Messe des Rameaux' was performed at Cheltenham with enormous success." "L'Abbé Wilson," says the journal referred to, "the curé of St. Gregory's Priory, was responsible for the performance, which will be repeated at Easter."

It seems only too true that the "Meistersingers" has not succeeded at La Scala. In the "Gazzetta Teatrale Italiana," a critic whose sympathy with the work is obvious, expresses his regret that it failed to attract the public. "I would have sworn," he says, "that the 'Meistersingers' would have proved a success for the management, both on account of the intrinsic value of the music and the originality of the subject. I was deceived."

Our correspondent in Rome informs us that the first of a series of six quartett concerts under the leadership of Leandro Campanari, violinist, took place on Sunday afternoon, Jan. 12th. The Lento from Rubinstein's Quartet, op. 17, No. 2, and the prestissimo from Sgambati's Quartet, op. 17 were most effectively played.

A new composer who, according to Herr Lessmann, promises to become a figure of considerable importance in the musical world, has just appeared at Berlin, in the person of Friedrich E. Koch, a 'cello player in the Königliche Kapelle of Berlin. Herr Koch gave a concert on the 6th inst. consisting entirely of his own compositions, a symphonic fugue for orchestra, a string quartett in G, a symphony "Von der Nordsee," and some songs for a baritone voice. Of all the instrumental works Herr Lessmann speaks in terms of very high praise.

After nearly forty years of active work Herr Tausch, the respected conductor of the Musikverein of Düsseldorf, will retire to well-earned repose at the close of the present musical season. On his retirement the town will appoint a Capellmeister of its own, with a salary of 6,000 marks, a post for which it is anticipated that there will be a severe competition.

The Joachim quartett party, consisting of Prof. Joachim, de Ahna, Wirth, and Hausmann, will shortly make their first appearance in Vienna and give two concerts.

After much dissatisfaction and unpleasantness Herr Max Bruch has resigned the conductorship of the "Orchesterverein" of Breslau, a post which he has filled for some years. As Herr Bruch is confessedly a composer and conductor of great capacity it is unfortunate that his engagements should so often have to be brought to a close in this disagreeable manner. A new work of his, "The Fiery Cross," was brought out at Breslau early last year, and it is said in some quarters that the director's excessive eagerness to produce his own works has been largely instrumental in producing the rupture.

Fires in theatres have been unusually numerous of late. Since the middle of last month no less than four theatres have been totally destroyed at Peth, Salamanca, Florence, and Zurich. In one only of these, that at Salamanca, was there any loss of life. At Peth the iron curtain was down, but proved utterly useless to prevent the flames from spreading from the stage to the theatre proper.

It does indeed appear that there are good grounds for complaining of the management of the Grand Opéra of Paris when we find that all that has been given in the way of novelties during the year 1889 has been the production of a ballet, "La Tempête," by M. Ambroise Thomas, and a revival of Donizetti's "Lucia." Nor was the Opéra Comique much more enterprising, its only novelties having been Massenet's "Esclarmonde" and a light two-act opera by Perronet, which had a very brief existence. There have been novelties of a sort also at the Nouveautés, the Bouffes, the Renaissance, the Menus-Plaisirs, and the Variétés, but none of them appear to have been successes of any noteworthy description.

It seems that the announcement of the death of M^{lle}. Turolla is, happily, incorrect. The young lady, though still very ill, is alive, and, it may be hoped, recovering on the beautiful shores of Lago Maggiore. Herr Vogl, the famous Wagnerian tenor, who was so seriously ill at New York, has recovered sufficiently to resume work to some extent.

M. Johannes Wolff, who recently achieved a great success at the Colonne Concerts when he played with Herr Grieg the latter's first and third sonatas for violin and pianoforte, has been nominated an "Officier de l'instruction publique" of France. M. Wolff, who has now returned to London, will again play in Paris at M. Colonne's concert on Feb. 2.

CONCERTS.

POPULAR CONCERTS.

No better work could be chosen wherewith to mark a special occasion at these concerts than Beethoven's Septet. It is one of Mr. Chappell's most-to-be-trusted "draws," and its inclusion in the programme of Saturday's concert was no doubt an important factor in bringing together so large an audience as then assembled at the inauguration of the new series. The work, whose beauty is to be scarcely impaired by age or repetition, was played admirably by M^{me}. Neruda, M^{rs}. Strauss, Lazarus, Paersch, Wotton, Reynolds, and Piatti. The concert was opened by Schubert's Quartet in A minor (with its most inspired of all minuets), of which a perfect rendering was given by the usual combination. Sir Charles Hallé played Beethoven's Sonata in E flat (op 7), wisely declining an encore for his excellent performance; and Mr. Hirwen Jones, the possessor of a very pleasant tenor voice and a refined method, sang songs by Sterndale Bennett, Rubinstein, and Goring Thomas.

The Greatest of all Pianofortes. THE STEINWAY PIANOFORTES. New York & London.
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On Monday evening the *pièce de résistance* was Schubert's Octet—a work over which it is customary to rhapsodise unreservedly. Consummately beautiful it certainly is in many ways; but it must surely be admitted that, were the date of its composition unknown, it would be assigned to an early period of its composer's career. It contains many passages reminiscent of Italian trivialities, and its variations might very well be signed by any of the cleverer variation-spinners of the time. There is, of course, no need to over-emphasize these defects, but indiscriminating worship even of so great a creator as Schubert is undesirable. The work was played by the artists who were associated in the performance of the Beethoven Septet, with the addition of Mr. Ries, in the admirable manner which might be expected of them. The attractiveness of the programme was enhanced by the presence as solo pianist of Madame Geisler-Schubert, a grand-niece of the composer, who made some successful appearances amongst us last season. She was associated with Signor Piatti in the performance of Mendelssohn's Sonata in B flat for pianoforte and 'cello, in which she displayed great refinement of feeling and excellence of technique. She was, however, less at home in Chopin's Ballade in G minor. The vocalist was Mr. Plunket Greene, who produced a deep impression by the wholly admirable way in which he interpreted songs by Schubert, Schumann, and a dramatic "Magyar Song" by Dr. Felix Semon.

THE "CECILIA" LITERARY AND MUSICAL INSTITUTE.

On Wednesday, the 8th inst., a *conversazione* took place at the new Cecilia Literary and Musical Institute at 39, Queen-square, Bloomsbury, to celebrate its opening to the public. Dr. Turpin presided, and in the course of a long and interesting speech he said that the Cecilia Institute was calculated to meet a great want, felt especially by members of the musical profession, and he thought the Institute would be well supported as soon as its existence was known, and that it would become a useful and permanent institution. The music was carefully selected and well rendered, the performers being the Fraser Quintett (lady instrumentalists) and Mr. T. W. Turner, tenor vocalist. The only recitation of the evening was impressively given by Mr. Thane. Among the attractions were a phonograph and stereoscopic apparatus, exhibited by the Stereoscopic Company; and a valuable collection of seals and dies, many of which are historically famous, exhibited by W. J. Taylor and Sons, medallists, of Red Lion-street. The meeting dispersed about 11 p.m. We understand that both ladies and gentlemen are eligible to become members, and that there is provision for country as well as town subscriptions. Particulars will be sent on application to the secretary at the Institute.

A NEW ORGAN.

The fine organ built by Messrs. Willis for the Concert Hall of the Hampstead Conservatoire of Music, Eton Avenue, Swiss Cottage, will be opened at the Conservatoire to-day (Saturday), at four p.m., by Dr. A. L. Peace, of Glasgow. Mr. H. L. Balfour, Dr. Bridge, M. Gigout, M. Guilmant, Mr. George Riseley, Mr. Walter Parratt, and Mr. C. W. Perkins have also been engaged for a series of recitals to take place during the forthcoming season. With such a list of able executants the recitals will doubtless prove attractive to many lovers of the king of instruments, as well as of great value to organ students. The organ has four manuals and the usual pedal board, the whole acting on forty-three speaking stops, five of which, four 16ft. and "octave," being devoted to the pedal organ. Many of the latest improvements in organ-building are included in the mechanism, and the upward compass of the manuals is extended to A.

TRINITY COLLEGE, LONDON.

The public distribution of diplomas and certificates by the Warden for the thirty-third half-yearly examination took place on Tuesday evening, when the College Diplomas in Music were conferred on the following ladies and gentlemen:—Licentiates in Music.—Thomas Henry Davis, B.A., Birmingham; Charles Stanley Parsonson, Bilston. Associates in Music.—Frederic William Clay, Manchester; Eliza Fraser, Southport; Hildegard B. Ginsburg, Virginia Water; Louise Goldhawk, Trinity College, London; Cordelia Addison Grylls, London; Elizabeth Harvey, Bristol; Charles

Healy, London; Helena Mary Hobson, Jarrow-on-Tyne; Frederick Wm. Humphreys, Derby; Dudley Powell Jepps, Sunderland; Lizzie Kenyon, Bowdon; John Latham, B.A., Sheffield; Wm. Augustus Montgomery, Doune; Albert Edward Ratcliffe, Helston; Annie Caroline Roberts, Welwyn; George Herbert Thompson, Ventnor; Emma Isabel Tuckett, Ilminster; Charlotte Jane Ullett, London; Ernest Wm. Leaman Watson, Truro; George Wetton-Spencer, Trinity College, London. Certificates as follows were also presented:—Preliminary Division A.Mus., 1; Further Arts, 2; Matriculation, 15; Associate-Pianists, 5; Certificated Pianists, 33; Certificated Vocalist, 1; Certificated Organist, 1; Certificated Violinist, 1; Certificated Harpist, 1; Associate-Flautist, 1; Theory Certificates, 11. Examiners: G. E. Bambridge, L.Mus.; Henry R. Bird; Frederick Corder; A. E. Drinkwater, M.A.; Myles B. Foster, L.Mus.; Alfred Gibson; Professor James Higgs, Mus.B.; E. J. Hopkins, Mus.D.; Rev. H. G. Bonavia Hunt, Mus.D.; E. Lockwood; A. H. Mann, Mus.D.; M. Maybrick; C. W. Pearce, Mus.D.; John Radcliff; Professor Gordon Saunders, Mus.D.; C. E. Armand Semple, B.A., M.D.; C. E. Willing, L.Mus.

PROVINCIAL.

EDINBURGH, JANUARY 14, 1890.—Although the programme of last night's orchestral concert—the fourth of Messrs. Patersons' series under Mr. Manns' able conductorship—contained several works of first rate importance, musically its chief attraction undoubtedly lay in the production, for the first time in Edinburgh, of Brahms' "Duo Concerto" for Violin, 'Cello and Orchestra, op. 102. Nor did this superior attractiveness rest on the mere novelty of a first hearing, but in an equal, if not even a greater degree, upon the intrinsic merits of the work itself. For the benefit of those who have not yet had the privilege of hearing it, the Duo, it may be stated, consists of three movements—a broad and powerfully-conceived allegro, an extremely thoughtful and melodious andante, and an uncommonly vigorous and pleasing vivace. And, speaking of last night's performance, it may be added that, in spite of its many and formidable difficulties, the entire work received, at the hands of all concerned, a most admirable interpretation; and that this was specially so as regards the solo parts, which were entrusted to Messieurs. Maurice Sons and Ernest Gillett, whose playing merits a special word of praise. Besides this *pièce de résistance* the audience were regaled with still another novelty, in the shape of a deliciously tuneful and dreamy *morceau de concert*—a "Barcarolle," entitled "Une Nuit à Lisbon," by Saint Saëns—with which, delicately played as it was by the band, and being also of the popular order of things, they appeared to be hugely captivated. Beethoven's Pastoral symphony, op. 68, Mendelssohn's "Hebrides," and Wagner's "Fliegende Holländer" overtures, and Gounod's "Funeral March of a Marionette" were also included in the programme; but with the exception of the Mendelssohn overture, which received a most finished and well-nigh faultless rendering, to which it was a real treat to listen, the performance of none of them call for any special comment beyond the remark that they each and all received very satisfactory treatment. The vocalist of the evening was Mdlle. Douilly, a young French mezzo soprano, and pupil of Madame Lemmens Sherrington, who made her first appearance in Edinburgh a few months ago as a member of Madame Patti's concert party. The favourable impression she then made was certainly confirmed, and to some extent strengthened on the present occasion, and would, no doubt, have been more fully so had she selected songs more within the scope of her present vocal resources than one, at least, of those in the programme. Her method is irreproachable, and her voice, though somewhat light, is still sympathetic and very carefully trained. The songs chosen were "Nobils Signor" ("Les Huguenots"), which was far too heavily accompanied by the orchestra—(accompanying, it must be said, is the worst thing the band does, although it might easily be otherwise were a little more attention given to niceties); and a new song by Gounod, "Easter Eve," with organ and 'cello obligato, and for which Mdlle. Douilly received and accepted a hearty encore.

GLASGOW.—The interest of last Saturday's Orchestral Concert largely centred in the *début* of a young Scottish pianist, Mr. W. Lindsay Lamb, who has studied for some years in Berlin, and more recently at the Royal Academy, London. Mr. Lamb chose for his principal solo Beethoven's G major concerto. Although his technical execution was admirable, and his style artistic and refined, his performance lacked intellectual

insight and interpretative power. His artistic intelligence and emotional sympathy are as yet insufficiently developed to enable him to interpret such a creation of poetic and musical genius as this concerto, but he displayed in his rendering of it a degree of technical accomplishment and excellence of method which would warrant us in anticipating from him, with ripened experience, artistic achievements of a high order. At this concert also Miss Mary Morgan contributed several vocal solos, and the principal orchestral item of the programme, Mozart's "Jupiter" symphony, received an admirable rendering under the able conductorship of Mr. Manns. At Tuesday evening's subscription concert the novelty was Brahms' concerto for violin and violoncello. As this work has already been fully noticed in this journal in connection with its performance in London and elsewhere it will be sufficient to say here that it received an adequate and highly creditable interpretation from Messrs. M. Sons and E. Gillet, and that it was more warmly appreciated by the audience than could have been expected considering the profound and intricate nature of the music. A good rendering of the Pastoral symphony and the overture to "Fingal's Cave" was also heard at this concert. Next week Herr Stavenhagen will play Liszt's concerto in A, No. 2, and Frederic Cliffe's symphony will be produced for the first time in Scotland.

MANCHESTER.—The scheme of Sir Charles Hallé's pianoforte recital on the 6th inst. included sonatas by Haydn, Hassler, Hummel, Méhul, Turini, and Clementi, the first and last of which were the most important compositions. The remaining pieces were two well-known Variations on Original Themes, the first being Haydn's in F minor, brought into notice by Rubinstein at his last recitals, and the second announced as Forster's, but better known as Mozart's Variations in A. The novelty at Sir Charles Hallé's eleventh concert was an Orchestral Suite in D, Op. 49, by Saint Saëns. The work consists of a Prelude, Sarabande, and Gavotte, three excellent movements in the ancient style, which are followed by a Romance and Finale, both of which are charming *morceaux*, but strangely modern to be found in such company. The orchestral writing is full of interesting points, one of the most striking being in the "musette" portion of the Gavotte, where the drone effect is obtained in a highly original manner by the sustaining of an inverted pedal by the violins, accompanied only by two flutes. Among the remaining instrumental items were Haydn's 7th Symphony in C, Wagner's "Siegfried Idyl," Spohr's 8th Violin Concerto in A minor, and Raff's "Ungarisches" in E, with Lady Hallé as soloist. In response to a recall after the performance of the latter piece, Lady Hallé gave an equally brilliant rendering of the "Mouvement Perpetuel" by Ries. Mr. Plunket Greene, though well received, was apparently suffering from a cold, and this detracted very considerably from what would otherwise have been a most successful first appearance. We hope to hear him again under more favourable circumstances.

BIRMINGHAM, JANUARY 13.—It is not the Russian influenza, the latest *maladie à la mode*, that has prevented me from sending you the customary epistle of our musical events; it is, on the contrary, *manque de sujet* which has caused this break in my correspondence. Since the Christmas performance of the "Messiah" by our Festival Choral Society there has been nothing of importance to record. The Birmingham and Midland Musical Guild gave an interesting popular concert, on which occasion pupils of the various Guild members were heard for the first time at our Town Hall. The principal vocalist, who caused a considerable amount of enthusiasm, was a Miss Sivider. She possesses a pleasant, fresh soprano, and sings with considerable taste. Having just obtained the Westmoreland Scholarship, she now enters the Royal Academy to complete her studies. Dr. C. S. Heap, who now seldom plays in public, was accorded a most enthusiastic reception. He gave a nocturne in D flat and a Valse of his own composition in a masterly manner. The great excitement of the week was caused by the Mayor's reception on Wednesday and the children's fancy dress-ball on Thursday. The first event was attended by over fifteen hundred persons, and was carried out with a splendour and grandeur hitherto unknown in Birmingham. The floral and other ornamental decorations were on a princely scale. Indian reception-rooms, decorated in the most brilliant Eastern fashion, ice grottoes, elegant drawing-rooms were conspicuous on account of their novelty. An excellent concert was provided in the Council Chamber for those who did not care to dance. The artists included Miss Kate Fusselle (soprano), Miss Beatrice Wrigley (contralto), Mr. John Probert (tenor), Mr. H. Peacock (baritone), Herr Heinrich Stück (violin), Mr. George Halford, Mus. Bac. F.C.O. (accompanist). Miss Fusselle is well-known in Birmingham, having by several previous performances

established a well-merited reputation. Miss Wrigley, a pupil of Mr. Hall, of Liverpool, made her *début*. She possesses a rich contralto of much power and sings with an artist's understanding. The tenor, Mr. Probert, is new to Birmingham, and an excellent opportunity was afforded him to sing before a select and cultivated audience. His method and style are lyrical in the extreme, and his voice sweet and pleasing. The other artists are of local celebrity, who united in giving lustre to the musical portion of the evening's entertainment. The Birmingham and Midland Institute Annual *Conversations* begins tomorrow, and lasts three days. The chief musical novelty will be a new operetta, "The Belle of the Area," founded on the original farce, "The Area Belle" (by Messrs. Brough and Halliday), with additional lyrics by Mr. E. A. Ould, and music specially composed for this occasion by Dr. Joseph C. Bridge. Owing to the Mayor's reception many local members of the National Society of Professional Musicians were prevented from attending the annual conference held this year at Bristol, and which to all accounts seemed to have been a brilliant and successful affair. Dr. Hubert Parry will honour the Birmingham and Midland Musical Guild by his presence on Friday, Feb. 7, and deliver this year's Guild lecture. He takes for his subject "Characteristics of Early English Secular Choral Music," with illustrations.

BRISTOL.—With the exception of the annual concert on Thursday of the Madrigal Society (of which detailed notice must be deferred) no musical event of importance has taken place in Bristol during the past fortnight (if the complimentary performance of the Madrigal Society and the Orpheus Glee Society to the N.S.P.M. be excluded). On Saturday the usual musical afternoon took place at the Fine Arts Academy, but from an artistic point of view the only pieces worth notice were several short compositions for piano by Henselt and Bendel, which were well played by Mr. Frederick Huxtable. On Tuesday the annual concert of Mr. Augustus Simmons was given in Colston Hall. A capital company of artists took part. Miss Jessie Royd and Miss Clara Butt contributed popular ballads. Mr. Morgan sang a comparatively new song written by Mr. George Riseley, entitled "Where'er my footsteps stray." It was produced in the form of a solo, with vocal accompaniment, at last year's concert of the Orpheus Glee Society. The composer has since arranged the accompaniment for piano and violin. It was given in this form with very much effect, Mr. Riseley being at the piano and Mr. Carrington playing the violin obligato. Mr. Montague Worlock repeated a piece by the same composer, "The sailor's good night," sung originally at the Press Banquet in Bristol twelve months since. The song is descriptive and vigorous in style, and the admirable interpretation it received gave general enjoyment. Mr. Carrington played a violin solo, and his daughter, who accompanied him, added a couple of short pianoforte pieces.

BATH, JAN. 17.—The programme of Mr. Van Praag's classical concert in the Pump Room was, as usual, exceedingly interesting. It included Reisinger's "Yelva" overture, Beethoven's second Symphony, Mendelssohn's "Fingal's Cave" overture, and Sterndale Bennett's trio for pianoforte, violin, and violoncello, Op. 26. The orchestral works were given with great precision and earnestness, and the trio was excellently played by Messrs. Rebilly, Van Praag, and Van Gelder.

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From the following scene, together with the fact of his NEVER ONCE USING THE WORD IN ALL HIS WORKS, is it to be inferred that Shakespeare was unacquainted with "SOAP"?

MACBETH, Act V., Scene I.—New Reading.



Lady Macbeth.—What, will these hands ne'er be clean?

Gentlewoman.—Ay, Madam. Here, for a shilling, is a sovereign remedy, fragrant of "all the perfumes of Arabia."—**PEARS' SOAP.**

